

**"THE TERROR OF THE TONG!"** Thrilling Story of Harry Wharton & Co., Inside.

# *The* **MAGNET** 2<sup>d</sup>

EVERY SATURDAY.







# Come Into the Office, Boys!

Here your Editor is pleased to answer questions and discuss topics of general interest. Write to him: Editor of the "Magnet," The Amalgamated Press, Ltd., Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C.4. A stamped and addressed envelope will ensure a reply.

**H**ERE is an interesting question which one of my girl readers raises this week—but which should also interest the majority of my boy readers!

## ARE BOYS CONCEITED?

My girl reader says they are—definitely so! She admits that boys are much more loyal friends than girls are, but she complains that they are always talking of what they have done and the "thrills" which they have experienced, and from this she deduces that they are "terribly conceited."

Now gather round, you fellows, and let's see if we can reply to this charge which has been made against us! First of all, I'll admit that most fellows—myself included—like to talk about unusual experiences they have had, and especially anything that has thrilled them.

But I can't agree with my girl reader that this comes from their conceit. On the other hand, the average boy loves to be "up and doing," and he likes to hear what other fellows are doing. Besides, it's only natural that he should want to emulate the examples of others. If boys didn't do that, where would all the heroes of our Empire come from? It does a boy good to talk about what he has done and what he would like to do. It gives him an incentive to do greater things, and thus help on the great work of progress.

All the same, I would like to have the opinions of my readers—both boys and girls—on this subject. So next time you write to me, let me know what you think about it!

And that brings me to a letter which I have received from a boy who lives at Chatham, and who is justly proud of one of his achievements. He wants to know

## IS IT A RECORD?

When he spent his holidays he was lucky enough to spend them in Northern Italy, where he crossed the famous Stelvio Pass into the Tyrol. The Stelvio Pass, at its highest point, is 9,000 feet above sea level, and he passed in a few hours from the broiling heat of the valley into the cold, ice-covered slopes of the mountain. Shortly after his return to this country he had the opportunity of descending the deepest coal mine in England, the shaft of which drops straight down for 3,000 feet. Therefore he has been 9,000 feet above the earth and 3,000 feet below—a total distance of 12,000 feet! Can any of you fellows beat that? If so I would be very pleased to hear about it.

**I** WAS talking to a Merchant Service captain of my acquaintance the other day, and he gave me some interesting information concerning

## REAL SEA DOGS

—of the four-footed variety. Most merchant ships, he tells me, carry dogs

aboard them, which are firm favourites with all the crew. In fact, there is quite a considerable doggy population at sea, and the animals change their ships almost as frequently as the sailors do. Sometimes a dog will "stow away" aboard some vessel, and it is generally adopted. However, a dog of a roving nature often transfers his affections to some other ship while in a foreign port, and some of these canine travellers must have been round the world innumerable times.

In this country we do not allow dogs to land without six months' quarantine if they have been abroad, but other countries are not so particular, and the docks and wharves of many foreign ports are frequently crowded with dog "beach-combers" waiting their chance to "jump a ship" and be signed on as the vessel's mascot!

Got your wallet or penknife yet? There's no reason why you shouldn't have a try to bag both, you know—but don't try to get them in the same week, or someone else may have to go without! Anyway, here's one of this week's prize-winning jokes, which comes from Frank Angel, of 48, Kingsley Road, Palmer's Green, N.13.

## A LITTLE MISLEADING!

Mother: "Bobby, I want you to be a really good boy while I am out."

Bobby: "I'll be good for a penny, mather."

Mother (gravely):

"Now, dear, I want you to understand that you cannot be my little boy unless you are good for nothing!"

Frank will have received his penknife by now.

It would hardly be fair to let this chat go by without mentioning a word or two about "The Holiday Annual" and "The Popular Book of Boys' Stories." The former contains an extra-long complete story of your old favourites—Harry Wharton & Co., a book-length topping tale of Tom Merry & Co. of St. Jim's, a rattling fine yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood, smashing motor-racing story, superb coloured plates, tricks, puzzles and other fine features too numerous to mention. This great Wonder Book, the delight of all boys and girls, is now obtainable from all newsagents—price 6s. "The Popular Book of Boys' Stories" is another Annual every boy and girl will treasure. Its contents include thrilling yarns of adventure on land and sea, written by the world's most famous

authors, and the best of illustrations which, together with its gorgeous coloured cover, presents one of the finest and cheapest presents one could wish to have. Be sure you get a copy—price 2s. 6d., on sale everywhere.

**B**Y the way, I almost forgot a clever Grayfriars limerick for which Miss Katherine Paton, of "Stanly," Brookfield, Johnston, Renfrewshire, earns a useful leather pocket wallet. Here it is:

Said Bunter, his back to the door:  
"With Quelchy I'll mop up the floor."  
But Quelchy came in  
And heard all the din.  
Now for Bunter there's trouble in store.

Here are two "rapid-fire" replies:—

The highest tide in England? (S. G. T., of Wainfleet.) This takes place at Avonmouth, where, at Spring tides, the rise of the tide is no less than forty-two feet!

Can a ship steer itself? (C. R., of Cardigan.) Yes. An instrument known as a Gyro-Pilot allows a course to be set, and then, when the ship deviates from that course an automatic device works the steering gear to bring her back again.

Now to get on with the washing! When I arrived at the office this morning—after a hectic rush for the train—one of my colleagues remarked:

"Hallo, I see you've still got your dog!"

Then I made the discovery that my trousers were almost covered with mud, and I remembered that Jo, my Alsatian puppy, had bidden me an effusive farewell that morning just after he had been in the garden. Now Jo regards the garden as a place in which to dig, and therefore the paws with which he had been digging were responsible for the mud on my trousers. Curious how Alsatians like to dig! If there's anything in a garden they'll get it up. Old bones, rusty tin cans, bits of wood, broken bottles, and—when I'm not looking—even my hollyhocks and marigolds!

However, I've been emulating Jo! I've been digging things up, too—real good things! And the first of them is

## "THE SOURCE OF THE RED DRAGON!"

By Frank Richards,

the long complete yarn of the chums of Greyfriars which appears in our pages next week. I dug it out of the pile of manuscripts which lies on my desk, and which is assuming tremendous proportions—evidence of the good things which I have in store for you.

Before long I'll be digging up another fine new serial for you, but in the meantime, George B. Rochester continues to keep the flag flying with "The Flying Spy!" a grand long instalment of which you will find in next week's issue.

"The Greyfriars Herald" will also be going strong in our centre pages, while our special rhymester will also do his little bit. Then, in addition to my chat and the usual winning jokes and limericks, there will be another interesting footer talk by "Old Ref."

That'll keep you supplied with jolly fine reading matter for another week, and then—look out for further good things!

YOUR EDITOR.

Do it  
Now!

Send along your Joke or your Greyfriars Limerick—or both—and win our useful prizes of leather pocket wallets and Sheffield steel penknives. All efforts to be sent to: c/o "Magnet," 8, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.).



# THE TERROR OF THE TONG!

A  
FRANK RICHARDS  
MASTERPIECE!



## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

**"S**INGAPORE!"  
"Glorious!"  
"Gee-lorious!" said Bob Cherry emphatically.  
"Jolly!" said Johnny Bull.  
The yacht *Silver Star* was steaming into the beautiful harbour of Singapore. Harry Wharton & Co., standing on the deck, gazed across shining blue waters at hills clad with tropical verdure.  
Billy Bunter sprawled in a deckchair, his eyes half-closed behind his big spectacles.  
Bunter had no eye for scenery.  
The yacht had threaded her way among lovely islands, wooded to the water's edge, mirrored in the smiling sea. Now the great harbour of Singapore lay before the eyes of the Greyfriars voyagers. Billy Bunter opened his eyes and turned his head, but he did not trouble to rise. He blinked sleepily at the Famous Five.  
"I say, you fellows—"  
"Glorious!" repeated Harry Wharton.  
"I say, have we got to China?" asked Bunter.  
"Not quite," grinned Bob Cherry.  
"Only about another thousand miles or so—"  
"Oh dear!" said Bunter.  
"Get up and look at Singapore, you fat slacker!" said Frank Nugent. "Do you want to go half round the world with your eyes shut?"  
"Oh! Is that Singapore?" asked Bunter. "Another beastly hot place?"  
He gave Singapore an indifferent blink.  
"Not so good as Margate, if you ask me!"  
"Oh, my hat!"  
Bunter grunted.

"It's hot," he said. "Not so beastly hot as the beastly Red Sea. But beastly hot!"  
"The warmfulness is a boonful blessing, my esteemed fat Bunter," remarked Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh.  
"You blessed niggers like being fried," grunted Bunter.  
"My esteemed fathead—"  
"Br-r-r! Scorched in the Mediterranean, baked in the Red Sea, fried on the Indian Ocean, and now we're going to be cooked at Singapore!" grumbled Bunter. "I hope it's not so hot as this in China! What is it like in China, Wun Lung?"

**Holiday adventures with a  
real live kick in 'em . . .  
Unlimited thrills for Harry  
Wharton & Co.—and YOU!**

"Velly nicey in China, fat ole Bunter!" answered Wun Lung. "All China velly nicey. Velly plotty, velly nicey warn. In Canton, plenty nicey little fat piggee lun about, just like fatter ole Bunter."  
"You cheezy heathen!" grunted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, what are you staring at? I can't see anything to stare at!"  
"Look at those lovely islands—"  
"Oh, blow the islands!"  
"Look at that lovely hill—"  
"I've seen hills before," grunted Bunter. "What is there to look at in a hill?"  
"Look at the shipping—"  
"Blow the shipping!"

"There's a Chinese junk—"  
"Fatheaded-looking sort of thing, isn't it?" said Bunter. "How the thump do they get a thing like that about?"  
"There's a sampan stacked with Malays. I expect their grandfathers were pirates!" said Bob.  
"Looks as if they might be themselves!" grunted Bunter. He settled himself in the deckchair again. "If that sort of thing is all there is to see I may as well have a nap till we get in."  
"Look at the sky!" hooted Bob.  
"The sky!" Bunter gave a puzzled blink upward. "What about the sky?"  
"Jever see a sky as blue as that at Margate?" demanded Bob.  
Sniff from Bunter.  
"Thank goodness, no! Looks like Reckitt's Blue, to me." Bunter yawned. "I hope there's something worth seeing when we get ashore."  
"Oh, there's a tramway ashore," said Bob sarcastically. "I dare say you'll like to look at the trams."  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Well, yes," agreed Bunter. "I'd like to see something civilised. This show looks to me more like a picture than a real place. I'm glad there's trams."

And the fat Philistine closed his eyes behind his spectacles, quite indifferent to a scene of tropical beauty.

But the chums of the *Remove* continued to look about them with keen and interested eyes.

A sampan, loaded with fruit, glided close to the yacht as she threaded her way at a leisurely rate to her anchorage.

A bronze-skinned Malay, in a flaring red sarong that fairly blazed in the strong sunlight, glanced up at the faces of the schoolboys over the yacht's rail, and smiled, with a flash of dazzling white teeth.

"I wonder if that chap's granddad was a pirate?" grinned Bob.

It was probable enough—indeed, it was possible that the gentleman in the red sarong dabbled in a little piracy himself in out-of-the-way corners among the islands.

Just now, however, he seemed to be in the fruit trade. Big bamboo baskets packed with ripe oranges were stacked in the sampan, and clusters of fat bananas hung all round it.

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"Look at that, Bunter," said Bob. "Eh?" "Food!" said Bob temptingly. Bunter sat up and took notice at once.

That magic word stirred him as no other could have done. Miles of the most brilliant tropical scenery might have glided by him unheeded. But food was food.

"I say, you fellows, I'm hungry!" he said.

"My dear man, you needn't mention that, as it's two hours since brekker, and you ate only enough for seven!" chuckled Bob. "Feast your eyes now, Bunter! Look at those podgy bananas! Look at those lovely red oranges! Something worth seeing at last."

Bob was right. Bunter had found at least one sight at Singapore that was worth the trouble of looking at. He fixed his eyes and his spectacles on the stacked fruit in the sampan that glided almost under the rail of the yacht. His fat mouth watered.

"I say, you fellows, lend me a silver dollar—"

"Bow-wow!"

"Yah!" Bunter ran his fat hands through his pockets and extracted a silver dollar of his own. He had received it in change at Penang, and it was a bad one. Bunter disliked spending his own money as a rule, but in this particular case he had no great objection.

He leaned over the rail and held up the silver dollar to the Malay, with the other hand pointing to the oranges.

The bronze man in the red sarong smiled and nodded. He answered in a tongue that was quite unknown to Bunter.

"What a lot of these ignorant savages can't speak English!" snorted Bunter contemptuously.

"What a lot of ignorant fatheads can't speak Malay!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Yah! I say, gimme some oranges!" called out Bunter. "Mind you give me good ones! See?"

The sampan was quite close, but Bunter shouted at the top of his voice. Bunter never could get it out of his head that a foreigner could be made to understand English by shouting at him.

The man in the red sarong held up a double handful of lovely oranges, red and ripe. Bunter nodded, and the Malay put the oranges into a small rush basket, latched the lid, and tossed it deftly on board the yacht. It dropped beside Bunter.

Bunter tossed the silver dollar, and the Malay caught it in a bronze hand and salaamed politely.

Bunter thrust open the rush basket, grabbed an orange, and immediately bit it open, and pushed a considerable portion of his fat features into it—which was Bunter's elegant way of eating an orange.

"Nice?" asked Bob, with a grin.

"Mmmmmmmmmmm!" Bunter gurgled happily.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! That chap seems excited about something," remarked Bob Cherry, glancing at the Malay.

The sampan had edged away from the slowly gliding yacht. Now it edged back again, and the man in the red sarong shouted to the schoolboys, in his own tongue, with considerable excitement in his face, his eyes and teeth flashing at a great rate. He held up the silver dollar, waving it in the air.

"What on earth's up?" asked Bob. "He seems waxy about something."

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"The waxfulness seems terrific," remarked Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

Bunter withdrew a juicy face from the orange.

"It's all right, you fellows! I expect he wants to give me some change! He can keep the change! I believe in treating these niggers generously."

The sampan pushed under the rail of the Silver Star, till it almost bumped, dancing on the wash of the yacht. Still holding up the dollar, the Malay fairly screamed.

"Do you understand that lingo, Wun Lung?" asked Harry.

"No savvy."

"You, Inky?"

"The knowfulness is not terrific."

"Well, he's bothered about something," said Wharton puzzled.

"I say, you fellows, he can keep the change—"

"It's not that, am I?"

"I say, what are we crawling like this for?" asked Bunter irritably. "Why can't we move? We're going as slow as that clumsy sampan. I don't like the look of that Malay. He looks as if he may have a knife about him. Call out to the mate to go quicker, you fellows."

"Fathead!"

The Malay brandished the silver dollar in the air. It was clear that he was excited and enraged about something—what; the juniors could not guess. He knew. And he wished that Mr. Green, the mate who was in charge of the deck, would buck up. He did not like the look of the Malay at all.

He turned a juicy face towards the excited native and waved a juicy fat hand at him.

"You bunk!" called out Bunter. "See! Get off! Buzz! Travell! Take your black chivvy away and bury it! See!"

The Malay gesticulated frantically. Suddenly he stopped, caught up an orange and hurled it at Bunter.

Squash!

"Yaroooooh!"

It was a big, fat, juicy orange. It split and smashed on Bunter's fat nose. The Owl of the Remove staggered and roared. Smash! came a second orange, catching him on a fat ear. Crash! came a bunch of bananas, under Bunter's fat chin, and he sprawled on the deck.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"What the thump—"

"Here, chuck it!" roared Wharton.

"What are you up to?"

"Ow! Keep him off!" yelled Bunter.

"Ow! Yarooooh! I say, you fellows, keep that beast away! I didn't know it was a bad dollar! Oh dear!"

"What?" roared Bob.

"You—you—you fat villain!" gasped Wharton. "You've spoofed him with a dud dollar—"

"Ow! How was I to know it was a bad dollar?" gasped Bunter. "I didn't know, of course. In fact, I think it was a good one. These niggers are a suspicious lot. A beastly nigger gave me that bad dollar at Penang, so why shouldn't I land it on another beastly nigger? Besides, it was a good one—perfectly good."

"You—you—you—" gasped Wharton.

He understood now the frantic excitement of the gentleman in the red sarong. Hastily he drew a good dollar from his pocket, and tossed it into the sampan. The man in red picked it up, tested it with his strong white teeth, and salaamed. He was satisfied now, and the sampan sheered off.

The juniors gathered round Billy Bunter. They eyed him in a way that quite alarmed him.

"You fat, spoofing porpoise!" said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"You—you swindling jelly-fish—"

"Look here—"

"You—you—you embarrassing octopus—"

"Beast!"

"You—you gave the man a bad dollar for his oranges! You—you—you—oh, there isn't a word for you! Collar him, and I'll stuff the giddy oranges down his back!" gasped Bob.

"Good egg!"

"I—I say, you fellows— Leggo! Keep off! Yarooooh! Help! Oh! Ow! Beasts! It was a good dollar— Yarooooh! Grrrrrrrrrrh!"

Bunter gurgled horribly as juicy oranges were squeezed down his back. He wriggled and writhed and roared. But the Greyfriars fellows were bent on making the punishment fit the crime; and orange after orange was stuffed down the fat junior's back till they were all gone. Then Bob Cherry squeezed the bunch of bananas after them.

"There!" he gasped. "Now try to get it into your fat head that honesty is the best policy."

"Grooooh! Beast! Ooooooh!"

Billy Bunter staggered away. He had taken one orange internally; all the rest externally. And he felt horrid.

"Oh, you rotters! Beasts!" he gasped. "Ow! I'm sticky! Ow! I'm horribly sticky! Wow! Ooooooh!"

The chums of the Remove resumed watching the scenery. Billy Bunter staggered down below. He wanted a wash and a change—and he wanted them badly. He was altogether too fruity for comfort. The Owl of the Remove did not reappear on deck till the Silver Star was at anchor in the harbour; and then there was still a fruity aroma clinging to him.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Ashore at Singapore!

**F**ERRERS LOCKE smiled as he sat down to lunch with the Greyfriars party, in the saloon of the Silver Star. Through the open ports, there were glimpses of the crowded harbour, ships of all nations, innumerable sampans, manned by Malays, Dyaks, or Chinese. The Baker Street detective read the thoughts of the schoolboys. They were eager for a run ashore, to see the sights of the city that was the Queen of the East. And Locke gave his young friends a good-humoured nod.

"There's no reason why you should not pay Singapore a visit," he said. "But Wun Lung must remain on board. There are thousands of Chinese in Singapore; and I have no doubt that there are many members of the Mandarin Tang Wang's 'tong.' There can be no doubt that the Silver Star is watched for here. I can take no risks with Wun Lung."

"Allee light," murmured Wun Lung. "Me stoppoo along ship."

"But the rest may have the afternoon ashore," said Ferrers Locke. "I can trust you not to wander too far, Wharton, or to land in any trouble?"

"Yes, rather!"

"It's all right, Mr. Locke," said Bunter. "I shall be with them. I'll look after them, as I usually do."

"Fathead!" said Bob Cherry politely.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"It's hard cheese on Wun Lung," said Harry. "But I suppose he's safer sticking to the ship."

"Me allee light," said the Chinese junior cheerfully. "Me no wantee killy along Singapore."

Ferrers Locke nodded.

"I have no doubt that the agents of



Tang Wang are on the watch, and looking for a chance to get at Wun Lung," he said. "It is my duty to hand him over safely to his father at Canton. We have had too many narrow escapes, to take unnecessary risks."

"We've seen nothing of the brutes since we passed the Red Sea," remarked Nugent. "You don't think that Tang Wang has chucked it, Mr. Locke?"

"Not in the least. The Mandarin Tang Wang cannot afford to chuck it, as you express it," said Locke. "He would 'lose face,' as they say in China. He is the chief of a powerful tong—a secret society—and he has given the order that Mr. Wun Chung Lung shall pay three thousand taels, or his son shall be killed. Mr. Wun has very rightly refused; and the attempts on Wun Lung's life have followed. Tang Wang cannot admit defeat—he would lose face—lose the respect of his tong if he allowed himself to be defeated by a Canton merchant. Others, from whom the tong seeks to extract money under threats, would follow Mr. Wun's example of defiance, if he successfully defied the tong."

"But will Wun Lung be safe from

serves his turn. He is descended from the ancient Ming emperors of China, and desires to restore that dynasty in his own person. So far as I can gather, he seeks now to raise money for his war chest."

"I've heard of Ming," remarked Bob Cherry. "But I thought it was some sort of pots, not emperors."

Ferrers Locke laughed.

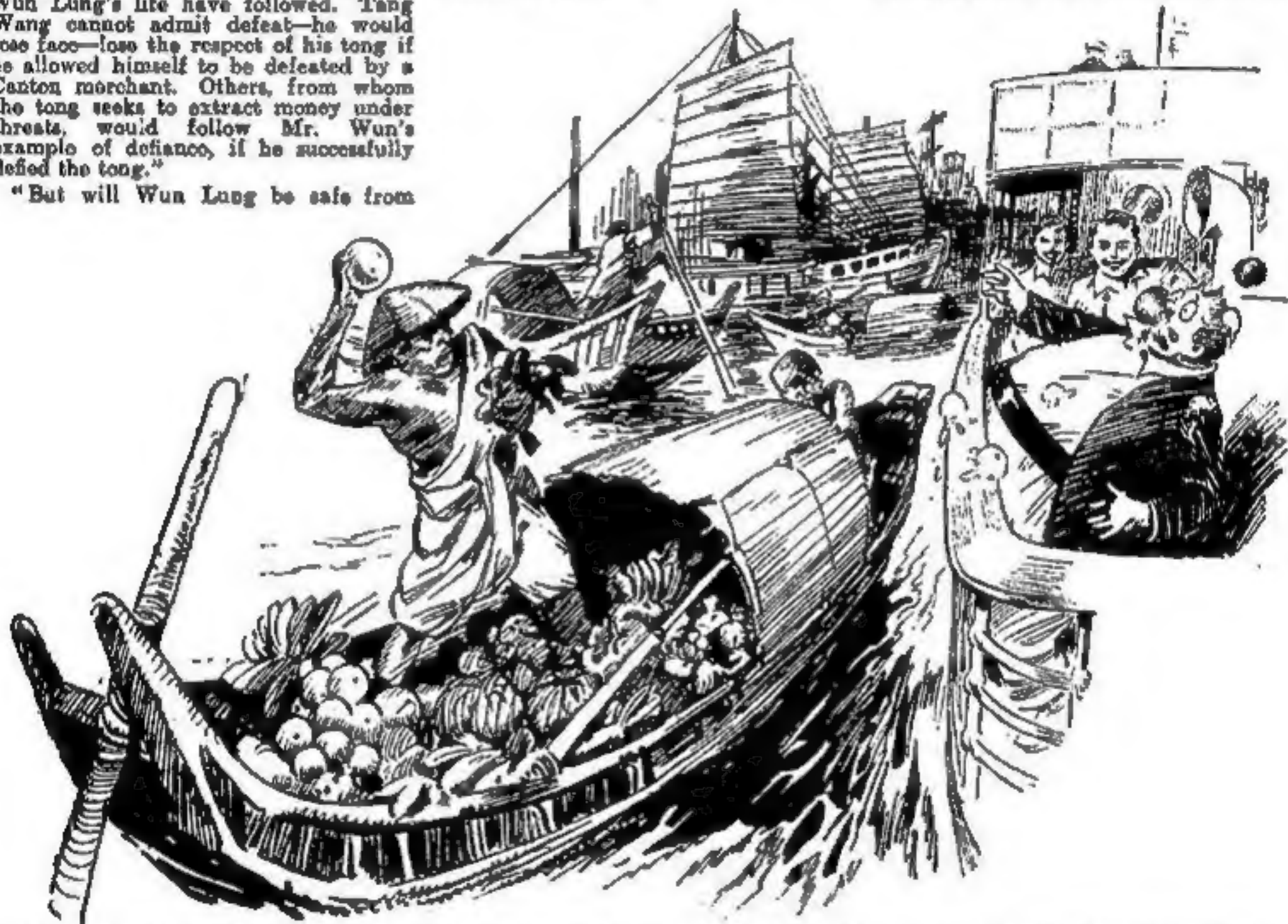
"The pottery of the Ming period is famous," he said. "The Ming dynasty reigned a long time in China, till they were displaced by the Ching—"

"The Ching?"

"Yes. That is the Manchu dynasty, which reigned till the recent revolution. As you know, China is a republic now, and split up into sections, governed by various tu-chuns—"

"But has Tang Wang any chance of getting away with it?" asked Johnny Bull.

"It is very probable. I, for one, do not believe that a republic will survive in China," answered Ferrers Locke. "The Manchu may return—or there may be another Ming dynasty—or, more probably, one of the war lords will ultimately make himself emperor—a sort of Chinese Napoleon Bonaparte. 'Young China,' as they call the reforming party, is very strong in the treaty ports—strong in many places—but I think Old China will prove stronger in the long run. At Hong Kong, for instance, you will see few Chinese with pigtails; the reformed Chinese has cut off his queue. Many Chinese have had their pigtails cut off by force, by soldiers



The excited native suddenly stooped, caught up an orange, and hurled it at Bunter. Squash! "Yarough!" yelled Bunter, as the big, fat, juicy fruit smashed on his nose.

the brutes when he gets home?" asked Bob.

"Plenty safe!" said the Chinese junior.

Ferrers Locke smiled.

"Mr. Wun is a very rich merchant," he said. "He keeps probably fifty to a hundred servants. Wun Lung will be well taken care of in his father's house. I shall have no further fear for him once he is safe at home. Until then we must take every care."

"Are there many tongs in China?" asked Bob.

"Hundreds—if not thousands! But many of them—most of them, in fact, are run with good objects. It is exceptional for a tong to be devoted to crime. And dangerous as are the criminal tongs, they are no worse and no more dangerous than the gangsters in New York and Chicago. And the Mandarin Tang Wang is not exactly what we should call a criminal, though he dabbles ruthlessly in crime when it

"What the thump is a tu-chun?" gasped Bob.

"A war lord. A number of tu-chuns are scrambling for the wreckage. But the state of China is not so lawless as you might judge by the European papers. 'Business as usual' goes on. I doubt whether we shall see any sign of the fighting, though it goes on intermittently all the time. The Chinese do not take war very seriously, because they are a serious people and keep their attention on business. It is probable that millions of Chinese have never even heard that there is no longer an emperor at Peking, and do not know that the Manchu has ceased to reign. News passes slowly from province to province—each province is as large as a European kingdom. And a Chinaman has a wonderful faculty for minding his own business."

Wun Lung nodded.

"Mistel Locke savvy China relly muchee," he remarked,

of the reforming factions. But China has changed very little in the last twenty-five centuries, and some observers think that the present changes are little more than skin-deep."

"But Japan changed pretty thoroughly," remarked Wharton.

"Japan is not China. To our European eyes a Japanese is very much like a Chinese. In actual fact, they are utterly dissimilar—more so than the English and the Spaniards. Neither has the change in Japan gone so far as most white men fancy," added Locke, with a smile. "The East is still the changeless East—under the surface."

"I'm jolly glad we're going to have a look at China, anyhow," said Bob Cherry, "and we're not afraid of the tongs—not even of a pair of tongs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Ferrers Locke rose from the table, and the juniors followed his example. Keen as they were on their visit to the



Celestial Empire—now a more or less Celestial Republic—they were more interested at the moment in Singapore, which was their last stop before Hong Kong.

Wun Lung remained contentedly on board the Silver Star, playing a solo game of chess in the saloon, while the Famous Five and Billy Bunter went ashore with the detective.

Locke pointed out the road into the town to the juniors, and entered an office, leaving them to walk on. Harry Wharton & Co. were glad of a walk to stretch their legs after a long voyage. Not so William George Bunter. Bunter was not fond of walking, and about fifty yards was always enough for Bunter.

"I say, you fellows, here's a car!" exclaimed Bunter, stopping to blink at a handsome motor that was drawn up by the roadside. "Fancy motor-cars here, you know!"

"Fathead! There are hundreds of cars here!" said Harry.

"Well, the beastly place is more civilised than it looks from the sea," remarked Bunter. "Don't hurry on, you chaps. Perhaps this car's for hire. I don't want to walk. Do they have taxis here?"

"Blessed if I know; but that car isn't a taxi, anyhow. Come on!"

"Hold on!" repeated Bunter.

He blinked at the car. It was an expensive and handsomely-appointed car, and obviously not plying for hire. A dark-skinned Arab chauffeur stood by it, still as a statue, and inside the car was a plump Malay gentleman, dressed in white ducks with a brilliant scarlet cummerbund. Bunter blinked at him.

"I say, you fellows, let's ask this nigger if we can hire the car," he said,

"I'll stand treat! You fellows needn't worry about that."

"Shut up, you am! He may understand English."

"Rubbish! Besides, I don't mind a nigger bearing me call him a nigger. Niggers are niggers, aren't they? Look here, we can make him understand by signs, see? I dare say he'll drive us into town for a dollar. Lot of rot it seems to me, a nigger having a car like this at all! I don't really approve of it. I believe in keeping niggers in their places."

"Will you shut up?" hissed Bob Cherry.

"No, I won't! You fellows are too jolly particular about these dashed natives," said Bunter. "Besides, he doesn't understand English—he looks a silly sort of fathead."

"My esteemed Bunter—"

"Shut up, Inky! I want this car," said Bunter. "Look here, if he won't let us have it, what about kicking him out of it?"

"What?" gasped Nugent.

"Well, I believe in taking the high hand with niggers. It's the best way of keeping them in their place. Look here, he'll understand if I hold up a dollar and point towards the town. See?"

"You fat idiot—"

"Oh, cheese it!" said Bunter.

He blinked into the car, at the grave-faced Malay who sat there, and held up a dollar between a fat finger and thumb. With the other podgy hand he pointed to the town.

"Catch on?" asked Bunter. "Understand! Bother the black image! Can't you understand that we want to hire the car, blow you?"

"I understand perfectly!" answered the Malay gentleman in excellent

English. "I regret that I cannot lend you my car."

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bunter. Even Bunter was a little abashed at discovering that the native gentleman had understood every word he had uttered.

The chuma of the Remove crimsoned with mortification. Harry Wharton stepped quickly to the car, raising his hat.

"We are sorry, sir!" he said. "Please let me apologize for this fat fool. We are going to kick him for his bad manners."

The Malay gentleman smiled.

"It is nothing, Tuan!" he said.

Wharton turned to Billy Bunter. He grasped him by the collar and swung him round. There was a yell of anticipation from Bunter.

"Ow! I say, you fellows—yaroooh!"

"Dribble him!" said Bob Cherry.

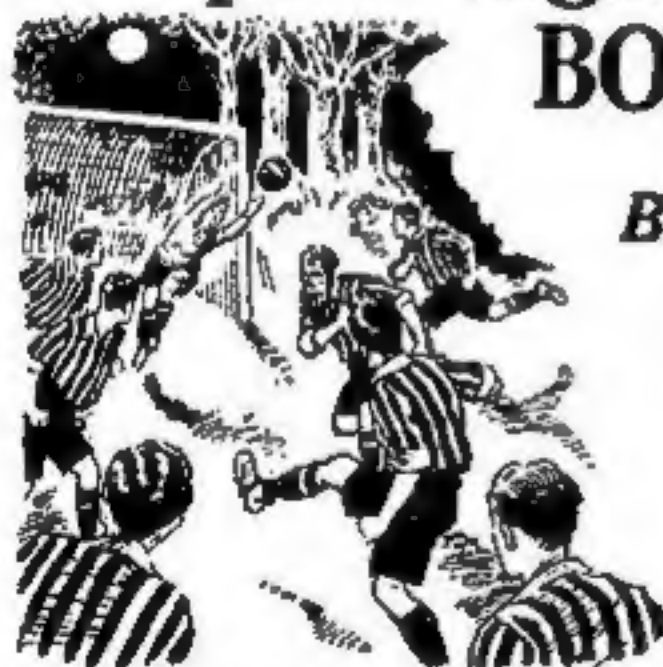
"I say—whoooooop!"

Bunter had not wanted to walk into the town. Now he ran! Behind him ran the Famous Five, kicking in turns.

"I say, you fellows—yarrroooooop!" roared Bunter. "Beasts! I'll jolly well—whoooooop! Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

Every time Bunter lagged a boot behind him helped him on. He ran and dodged and yelled and howled, streaming with perspiration. Again and again he slowed down; again and again a clumping boot started him afresh. He hopped and howled, and howled and hopped. Astonished stares were turned on the party from all sides; Malays, Arabs, Chinese, Dyaks, Tamils, Hindoos, and Burmese stared at them in amazement. But the juniors did not heed. They felt that Bunter required a lesson in manners, and Bunter was getting it. Not till they were tired did they cease to dribble Bunter. By that time Bunter was more than tired.

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### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### A Ride in a Rickshaw!

"JINRICKSHA, sar?"

The rickshaw coolie bowed and grinned to the Greyfriars juniors. Harry Wharton & Co. stopped.

They had been strolling about Singapore for a couple of hours, and had decided to pay a visit to the Botanical Gardens, where Locke had told them that a wonderful collection of orchids was to be seen. They had had enough walking for a hot afternoon, and the idea of taking rickshaws rather appealed to them. But there was only one rickshaw at hand, and the little two-wheeled carriages, drawn by coolies, were designed to take only one passenger.

"Jinricksha, sar? Fine carriage, sar! Go anywhere, sar! One dollar, sar! You like this fine rickshaw, sar?"

"I say, you fellows, I'll take that rickshaw!" Bunter panted up. "Don't you bag that rickshaw! I want it."

Bunter was in a bad temper. He had rolled around with the Famous Five for a couple of hours, frowning. Bunter did not like being kicked. He often deserved it, but he never liked it. Many times Bunter had complained that he did not receive the treatment he deserved. Now he had received it, and still he was not satisfied.

Still, he had refrained from further rude remarks concerning coloured people, who formed the immense majority of the inhabitants of Singapore. So far, he had not landed the party in any further trouble. And his wrathful frowns did not worry the Famous Five. Bunter's deep indignation passed them by like the idle wind which they regarded not.

Bunter fairly panted with relief as he grabbed the rickshaw. His fat little



legs were tired, and he was not in the mood for any more walking.

The coolie—a Chinese, clad in little more than a loincloth—grinned and bowed to Bunter.

"Fine carriage, sar! One dollar, sar! Take you somewhere, sar!"

"I say, you fellows—"

"We'd better keep together," said Harry. "Mr. Locke told us not to separate while we were ashore."

"Blow Mr. Locke! I'm going to ride! If you fellows think you're going to wear me out, you're jolly well mistaken—see? I'm going to bag this rickshaw."

"Blessed if I think it will stand your weight, Bunter," said Bob, looking at the flimsy vehicle. "You'll sink it."

"Yah! Help me in, you rotters!"

"You'd better walk with us, fat-head," said Harry.

"Shan't!"

"Well, we'll walk after the rickshaw, and the man can go slow," said Wharton. "I dare say he will be glad to go slow, with Bunter's weight to pull."

"The gladfulness will probably be terrific."

"Are you going to help me in?" hooted Bunter.

Bunter was helped in. He plumped down into the rickshaw with a concussion that made it groan.

But it supported his weight, though it was pretty certain that it had never been subjected to such a strain before.

"That's better!" gasped Bunter.

"Jolly glad to be sitting down! You fellows don't care if you wear me to a shadow. I believe you'd like to see me fall down exhausted. Yah!"

"The rickshaw man's more likely to fall down exhausted," said Frank Nugent. "He's going to earn that dollar."

Wharton instructed the rickshaw man. "Botanical Gardens," he said. "You savvy?"

"Me savvy, sar. Take you somewhere, sar? Yes, sar. Fine carriage!"

"Go slow, and don't get out of our sight. You savvy?"

"Yes, sar. Plenty savvy!"

"Go it, then."

The coolie grasped the handles of the rickshaw and started. The little carriage ran easily and lightly, in spite of the weight it carried.

Billy Bunter grinned back at the juniors through the open slats of the window. Either the coolie had not understood Wharton, or he did not heed his instructions, for he started at a run, and the rickshaw bowled along at a pace that forced the juniors to break into a rapid trot to keep up with it. Bunter chuckled. These fellows had kicked him, and it was rather agreeable to see them slogging along in a blazing sun, while he sat comfortably at rest.

"Hold on!" shouted Wharton.

"Slower!"

"Faster!" Bunter called to the rickshaw man. "Give 'em a run. See! Get along faster."

"Yes, sar."

"Slow down, you ass!" roared Bob Cherry.

The coolie was fairly bolting now. The rickshaw whizzed behind him. Harry Wharton & Co. ran hard. They shouted angrily to Bunter. Racing in the sun of Singapore was both unpleasant and dangerous.

"Stop him, you fat idiot!" roared Johnny Bull. "We shall lose sight of you."

"He, he, he!"

Wharton slacked down, his face streaming with perspiration.

"Chuck it!" he said. "Anyhow, the

man's taking him to the Botanical Gardens, and we shall find him there all right. We can't chase him in this blaze."

"No fear!" said Bob, pushing back his hat and mopping his perspiring brow.

"Let him rip."

And the juniors walked on at a more moderate pace, and the rickshaw vanished from sight round a corner.

Bunter sat and grinned.

He was enjoying his ride. Once or twice he gave a gasp as the coolie spun round corners, fearing that the light vehicle would overturn. But it ran steadily enough. It was very pleasant to sit in the shade, at peaceful rest, and think of the other fellows running.

But when Bunter glanced back again the Famous Five were no longer in sight.

"Beasts!" grunted Bunter. "Fat lot they care if I get lost in Singapore."

Evidently the juniors had given up the chase, with the selfishness that Bunter felt that he might really have expected of them.

Still, it did not matter. He would be able to sit in the shade of a tree at the Botanical Gardens and wait for them to arrive. And he was not exerting

### THIS CLEVER GREYFRIARS LIMERICK,

which has been sent in by C. H. Jones, of 26, Primrose Hill Road, South Hampstead, N.W.3, is a worthy winner of one of this week's leather pocket wallets:

"Say, bo, you just fat a guy  
Bark.  
I'm Fisher T. Fish, o' Nee  
Yark.  
Something's bitin' me bad,  
Oh, Great Gophers, it's sad!  
Some Jay's pinched my cake,  
for a lark!"

Write a Greyfriars Limerick and  
win one of these useful wallets  
YOURSELF!

himself now. That was the important thing.

But after a time Bunter began to wonder where those Botanical Gardens were. The rickshaw had slowed down in streets that were narrow and ill-smelling, lined with native houses and shops that looked far from clean. From the roadway, cluttered with garbage, came an unpleasant smell. Bunter called to the panting coolie perspiring between the shafts.

"Here, I say! Sure this is the right way?"

"All right, sar! Yes, sar! Mo take you anywhere, sar."

The coolie ran on.

"Blessed if I like the look of this place!" grunted Bunter. "I suppose the brute is taking a short cut. I'll be glad to get out of this."

The rickshaw turned into a narrow way, scarcely more than an alley. The way ran between walls, and the coolie stopped at last at a door set in a wall. He gave a shrill call, and the door was immediately opened by another Chinaman. Bunter blinked out in astonishment that was not unmixed with alarm. Obviously, this couldn't be the Botanical Gardens.

"I say, where are you going?" called out Bunter.

The coolie, without replying, ran the rickshaw through the doorway, and the door was immediately closed behind it.

Bunter felt his fat heart thump.

He was in a courtyard, surrounded by high walls on three sides; on the fourth was a house. There was an open doorway, in which a Chinaman stood. His appearance was very different from that of the half-naked coolie; he was richly attired in Chinese garb. The rickshaw man kow-towed to him with deep respect.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter. "Where has that beast brought me? I—I wonder what's up?"

He was alarmed now. In such a port as Singapore it was far from unknown for an unwary traveller to be trapped and robbed, and perhaps murdered.

Bunter scrambled out of the rickshaw, palpitating.

The coolie immediately dropped a heavy and unclean hand on his fat shoulder.

"You please stop!" he said.

Bunter gasped.

"I—I say, this isn't the Botanical Gardens! I—I say, what have you brought me here for?"

The coolie grinned.

"The ta jen tell you," he said.

"The—the what?"

"Ta jen, sar."

"Oh, don't be a silly ass!" snapped Bunter. "What the thump is a ta jen, blow you!"

The coolie indicated the richly-clad Chinaman in the doorway.

"He one ta jen, sar—noble Chinese."

"But—what—"

Bunter blinked at the ta jen. Whether he was a noble Chinese or not, the fat junior could see that he was very different from the coolies. He carried an ivory fan, painted with a spray of lilies, in his hand, and he screened his face with it, Bunter seeing little more of him than his slanting eyes. Apparently the noble Chinese did not desire the fat junior to see his features.

He made Bunter a sign to enter the house. Bunter did not stir. He blinked round him in dismay. The door of the courtyard was shut, and the doorkeeper had barred it and stood by it, grinning. There was no escape for Bunter.

"Please to enter my poor house," said the Chinese behind the fan, in English that was very flowery. "Honour this poor one by making your distinguished entrance."

"But—but I—I say—"

"You are my honourable guest, sir. Enter, if it be your noble pleasure."

"It jolly well isn't!" gasped Bunter. "Look here, my friends are expecting me at the Botanical Gardens—"

"I weep for their disappointment," said the Chinaman politely. "But you must enter my poor house."

He made a sign to the coolie. A rough hand tightened on Billy Bunter's shoulder, and he was jerked into the doorway.

"I—I say—leggo!" yelled Bunter.

The Chinese moved aside, and the coolie swung Bunter into the house.

"Oh crikey!" gasped Bunter.

He was led along a dusky passage and bundled into a room that seemed to have no windows and only one door. That door was immediately closed behind Bunter, and he heard a bolt shot.

He sat on the floor and gasped.

"Oh crumbs!"

What it all meant was a mystery to Bunter. They had not robbed him, or harmed him; but he was bolted in a windowless room, a prisoner. He could not begin to understand what it might all mean. But from the bottom of his fat heart Bunter wished that he had never had that ride in the rickshaw.

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## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

"Amok!"

"THE fat idiot!"

"The howling ass!"

"The terrific fathead!"

Harry Wharton &amp; Co. were, of course, discussing Bunter.

Often and often the fat Owl had had an exasperating effect on them. But never had he exasperated them quite so much as now.

They were in the Botanical Gardens; but Bunter was not to be found there. They had walked round, looking at the orchids, at the aviary, which contained parakeets, eagles, cockatoos, all sorts of tropical birds; they had visited the animals' quarters, and looked at bears, monkeys, snakes, and wildcats; and all the time they had looked for Bunter and had not seen him. They searched through the extensive and beautiful gardens; they inquired right and left, but the result was the same—Bunter was not there, and nobody seemed to have seen anything of him or his rickshaw.

It was intensely exasperating.

Ferrers Locke had bidden the juniors keep together and keep out of trouble. They had intended to do so. But they had not counted on the treachery of a jinriksha man, and did not suspect it. In Singapore, as in other cities of the Far East, one takes a rickshaw as one takes a taxi in the West. It did not occur to the juniors—for the present, at least—that that particular rickshaw man had had a particular purpose to serve in offering them his services.

"The burbling idiot!" said Bob. "He hasn't waited for us! I suppose he got here half an hour ahead and tired of waiting."

"I'll jolly well kick him when we find him again!" growled Johnny Bull.

"The kickfulness is the proper caper," agreed Hurree Jamsat Ram Singh, "but the findfulness comes first. The esteemed Locke will be absurdly infuriated if we lose Bunter in Singapore."

"Well, I suppose even that idiot will have sense enough to get back to the yacht on his own," said Johnny Bull.

"I dare say he's riding round the town in that rickshaw," said Nugent. "He may have tried to bilk the coolie and got into trouble."

"Oh, my hat!"

"The awful ass! We'd better look for him," said Harry. "He's not here, that's a cert. After all, we've got another couple of hours before we need go back. I dare say we shall come across Bunter."

The Famous Five left the Botanical Gardens and walked back into the town. They kept an eye on every rickshaw they saw—and they saw many. But Bunter was not in any of them.

Up and down and round about Singapore they walked, keeping their eyes open for Bunter. Several rickshaw coolies hailed them; but the juniors were not thinking of taking a ride. They were getting anxious about Bunter. If there was any trouble to be found in Singapore Bunter was certain to find it—and it looked as if he had done so.

They were extremely unwilling to meet Ferrers Locke with the news that one of the party was missing.

The Silver Star was to leave Singapore the following day, and it was scarcely possible to leave Bunter behind. At the same time, it was Locke's first duty to convey Wun Lung safely to Canton.

There was no doubt that the Baker Street detective would be deeply annoyed if Bunter caused delay.

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"And the fat villain may be on board all the time," growled Johnny Bull. "He may have gone back to the ship."

"More likely stuffing grub somewhere," said Nugent.

"The likeness is terrific."

"Well, we'd better keep it up till it's time to go back to the yacht," said Harry Wharton. "The fat dummy may turn up any minute."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! What's the giddy row?" exclaimed Bob Cherry suddenly.

Three or four Malays dashed past the juniors suddenly—so suddenly that they jostled them roughly. A white man in ducks and a pith helmet rushed by and shouted to the startled juniors as he passed.

"Run!"

He vanished the next moment.

"What the thump!" exclaimed Bob.

People were running and yelling on all sides. Cries in many languages rent the air. Rickshaws and cars stood deserted on the street; men and women dodged into shops and slammed the doors. In utter bewilderment the juniors stared round them.

"My hat! Is it a giddy riot, like the one we dropped into at Port Said?" ejaculated Bob.

"It's not that! Goodness knows what it is! What is everybody running for? What are they shouting?"

"Amok!" came a terrified yell.

"Amok! Amok!"

"What the thump does amok mean?"

"Goodness knows!"

"Mad bull, or mad dog, or something!"

"Look!" yelled Bob.

Down the street, which was almost deserted, came a wild and fearful figure.

It was a Malay, with rolling wild eyes—the eyes of a madman—brandishing a gleaming creese in either hand.

The juniors stared at him in horror.

"Amok!" came screaming voices amid the pattering of fleeing feet. "Amok!"

"Hook it!" gasped Bob. "It's a lunatic running amok! Run for your lives!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"Run!"

The juniors understood now why the crowd were running. And they ran, too.

The maddened Malay swept down the street. His fierce, rolling eyes glared round for victims. A coolie dodged across the street, hunting shelter, and the Malay leaped at him like a tiger, and struck with both the long gleaming knives. The coolie fell, blood streaming from his wounds, and the amok screamed and rushed on, brandishing the creeses.

Harry Wharton &amp; Co. had heard and read of such things. But the reality thrilled them with horror. Opium, perhaps, was the cause of the madness that had seized on the man; perhaps sunstroke; perhaps both, and other causes. Whatever the cause, the Malay was now a raging madman, running amok, thirsting for blood, as unreasoning and uncontrollable as a wild beast in the jungle.

"Put it on!" panted Bob.

The Greyfriars fellows ran for their lives. They dodged round a corner in the midst of a fleeing crowd, and in the rush of jostling fugitives they were separated. Behind them was the patter of the madman's naked feet, and his hoarse yelling. A fearful scream told that another victim had fallen under the creeses. Then there was a shot. It was followed by another and another.

The yelling of the amok was heard no more.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Missing!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

"Bob!"

"Here we are again!"

"Where's Franky?"

"Wharton—"

"Here!"

"Here's Inky—"

Four of the Famous Five gathered again. People were in the street now; the sudden panic was over. Of what had happened to the amok, the Greyfriars chums knew nothing precisely, and did not care to think. The ringing shots had told their own tale.

They saw no more of him. They were two streets away from the spot where the firing had sounded.

Four of them gathered—and they looked round anxiously for the fifth—Frank Nugent. But Nugent did not turn up.

All the five had been separated in the hurrying, jostling crowd; but they had heard each other calling, and come together—four of them. Nugent was not to be seen.

"He's all right," said Bob quickly, as he saw a cloud of anxiety settle on Wharton's face. "He was with us coming round the corner—the amok never got anywhere near him."

"That's so," said Johnny Bull.

"He's been rushed on in the crowd—we'll come across him soon."

"If he finds that he's lost us, he will head for the harbour," said Harry. "It's time we got back, anyhow, to meet Mr. Locke for the boat."

"May find him there with Bunter," agreed Bob.

It was certain, at least, that the mad Malay had been nowhere near Nugent; he had not been harmed by the amok. And as the juniors failed to see anything of him, they had to conclude that, whirled out of their sight by the scurrying crowds, he had given them up and headed for the harbour. So after a few more minutes spent in vain searching and calling, the four took that direction.

The tall figure of Ferrers Locke was standing by the landing-place when the four juniors arrived there.

Locke gave them a quick glance.

"You are on time," he said. "But where are the others—Bunter and Nugent?"

"Aren't they here?" ejaculated Bob.

"Have—haven't they come back?" exclaimed Wharton, in dismay.

"No."

"Oh crumbs!"

Locke's face set suddenly.

"There has been alarm of an amok," he said. "An opium-maddened Malay has been shot, after killing two or three victims. Is it possible—?"

"No, no!" exclaimed Wharton hastily. "It's not that! We saw the amok, and got away from him all right. We got separated—"

"And they did not rejoin you?"

"Nugent did not. Bunter was lost a couple of hours ago." Harry Wharton hurriedly explained what had happened.

Locke listened quietly.

"It is strange enough," he said.

"Both of them, if they could not find you, would naturally have come back to the harbour. But I have seen nothing of them." He reflected for a moment or two. "But I have not been back to the Silver Star—it is barely possible that they got back here, and instead of waiting, took a sampan back to the yacht."

"Frank wouldn't," said Harry. "He would know we should expect to find him here! Bunter might."

"I think we had better get on board."



at once, and make sure," said Locke. "If they are lost, I must lose no time in inquiring after them."

"Frank may get back here any minute," said Harry. "If he's lost his way in the city, he might be later than us."

"Possibly!" said Locke, with a nod. "If you'll let me wait here for him—"

"I think," said Ferrers Locke quietly, "that you had better get aboard. Possibly I made a mistake in allowing you ashore."

Wharton coloured. "We couldn't help—" he began.

"I am not blaming you, my boy," said the Baker Street detective kindly. "Do not think so for a moment! If a mistake has been made it is mine. I hope that Bunter and Nugent may only be lost. If so, they will be found—the worst that can happen is some delay in our getting to sea again. But—but—" Ferrers Locke broke off abruptly. "We shall see! In the meantime, let us get on board."

He beckoned to a Chinese boatman, and called:

"Sampan lai!" The sampan glided in, and the juniors stepped on board, the detective, after a last glance round, following them.

In a few minutes the sampan bumped on the anchored yacht. Wun Lung's cheery little yellow face looked down at them over the rail, as the ladder was lowered.

Quickly the juniors and the detective scrambled up.

"Is Nugent here?" Wharton called out breathlessly, before his feet were on the deck.

Wun Lung opened his almond eyes in surprise.

"No here," he answered. "He along you."

"He's not come back!"

"No come along ship."

"Or Bunter?"

"Buntee no comey."

Ferrers Locke compressed his lips. There was a glint in his eyes. He spoke a few words to Mr. Green, the mate, and then turned to the juniors again.

"Remain on board!" he said curtly.

And he stepped back into the sampan, and the boatman pushed off from the Silver Star.

The four chums looked at one another. So far, they had only supposed that Bunter and Nugent were lost. But it was clear, from Ferrers Locke's look, that he feared worse than that.

"What—what could have happened to them in Singapore?" said Bob in a low voice. "They can't be hurt—they can't have had any accident—there was only

that mad Malay, and they were nowhere near him."

Wharton breathed hard.

"If it was only Bunter, I should think the silly ass had lost himself," he said. "But Nugent—he's no fool. He could find his way back easily enough—or he could ask—plenty of people speak English here—or he could ask in a shop—or take a rickshaw—"

"May be coming along this minute," said Johnny. "We can see the landing-place from here. May see him any tick."

"I—I hope so."

"But what do you think might have

He agreed, but his heart was heavy. "Mr. Locke fears it," he said. "Unless I'm greatly mistaken, he fears that they're in the hands of the tong."

"Blessed if I can think so," said Bob. "I can't see that the tong has any purpose to serve by bagging them."

"Well, I can't either. But—" "They may turn up any minute," said Johnny Bull.

"What do you think, Wun Lung?" asked Bob. "Do you think the blessed tong would want to damage any of us if they couldn't get at you by doing it?"

Wun Lung shook his head.

"No tinkee," he answered.

"It's all right," said Bob. "They'll turn up."

Wharton nodded; but his heart was heavy, and his face clouded.

The juniors remained on deck, watching the landing-place in the red of the sinking sun, hoping to see the missing juniors appear in sight. But neither Bunter nor Nugent appeared. Ferrers Locke had gone ashore, no doubt to obtain the help of the authorities in a search for the missing schoolboys. The juniors fervently hoped that he would bring back news when he returned.



"Please to enter my poor house," said the richly-clad Chinaman behind the fan. "You are my honourable guest, sir!" "Ow!" gasped Bunter.

happened, then?" asked Bob. "Mr. Locke looked awfully serious. What have you got in your head, Harry?"

"Wun Lung has enemies here," said Wharton, in a low voice. "That's why he was left on board. It's possible that—that—"

Bob Cherry whistled. "But Tang Wang's gang don't want any of us," he said. "It's Wun Lung they're after. They haven't bothered us, so far."

"Except when they tried to sink the yacht in the Red Sea," said Harry. "Tang Wang wouldn't hesitate to destroy every man on the Silver Star for the sake of getting at Wun Lung."

"I know. But bagging any of us in Singapore won't help him get at Wun Lung. Wun's safe here, whether they've got Bunter and Nugent or not. They don't want any of us. They don't care if they mop us up when they're mopping up Wun Lung; but they couldn't take the trouble to mop us up for nothing. They've had chances before this."

"That's so," agreed Harry.

A sampan, with a sail cut in the shape of a dragon, glided down to the Silver Star. It had a crew of four Chinese, and on a heap of cushions sat their master, a plump Chinese, in rich attire, with an ivory fan in one hand, with which he gently fanned himself, and in the other a golden cage, containing a bullfinch, resting on his knee. The juniors watched him idly as the sampan drew nearer, Wun Lung with more interest. The sampan stopped under the rail of the yacht, and the Chinese on the cushions stood up and bowed gracefully to the juniors, looking down.

"The humble Ah Feng greets your honourable lordships," he said. "Is it permitted for this contemptible person to have speech with the born-long-before-me Mister Locke?"

Mr. Green came quickly to the side. "What do you want?" he rapped.

Wun Lung could see, and the English juniors could realise, that Mr. Ah Feng was a man of consequence, a gentleman

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in his own country; but to Mr. Green he was a "Chink."

The mate's inquiry did not err on the side of politeness. But no doubt Ah Feng was accustomed to the gruffness of the "foreign devils."

He bowed to the mate with undiminished urbanity.

"This reptile of a Chinese has news for the honourable Lord Locke, who was born a thousand years ago," he said.

"Come on board!" grunted Green.

In spite of their anxiety for the missing juniors, Harry Wharton & Co. could not help smiling at the elaborate politeness of the Chinaman. The kind of politeness that in England leads a man to sign himself "Your humble and obedient servant" is carried to unheard-of lengths by the Chinese, probably the politest people on earth.

A courteous Chinaman will carry politeness to the extent of calling himself a reptile, a worm, or a toad, unfit to breathe the perfumed air ennobled and purified by the glorious presence of the person to whom he is speaking.

Probably it is about as sincere as that of the European who signs himself "humble and obedient servant," when he certainly has no intention of being anything of the sort.

And as, in China, age is highly honoured, a polite Chinaman will represent himself as being infinitely younger than the person to whom he desires to be courteous. It is particularly gracious to hint to your interlocutor that he is a thousand years old.

Mr. Ah Feng ascended the accommodation ladder without parting with either his fan or his caged bullfinch. What the thump he was carrying a bird about with him for the juniors could not imagine. They had not yet seen China and its ways. Mr. Ah carried his bullfinch about with him because he was fond of it—a natural proceeding in a Chinese, though odd to European eyes.

Arrived on deck, Mr. Ah kow-towed to Mr. Green. His flowing garments billowed round him in waves of silken brocade as he almost touched the deck with his nose.

Mr. Green did not kow-tow. He had not a lot of politeness to waste on a Chink. Neither was it easy to kow-tow in British trousers.

"You've got news for Mr. Locke?" he demanded.

"This humble and despised person has news for his honourable ears," assented Mr. Ah.

"About the boys?"

Mr. Ah kow-towed again.

"Well, get it off your chest," said Mr. Green. "Mr. Locke is absent, but you can tell me."

"The news is only for the old and honourable ears of the long-ago-born Lord Locke!" answered Ah Feng.

"Then you'll have to wait for him."

"This slave will wait if it is permitted to him to disgrace the beautiful ship of Lord Locke with his disgusting presence," answered Ah Feng.

Harry Wharton politely handed the Chinese a deckchair. Wun Lung, at a sign from Mr. Green, had gone below before the Chinaman came up the side. Mr. Green was taking no risks.

And he kept a very sharp eye on Mr. Ah as he sat in the deckchair Wharton handed him to wait for the return of the Baker Street detective. But Mr. Ah did not seem on mischief bent. He sat placidly, with an expressionless face, that seemed carved in ivory, the gilded cage resting on his knee, occasionally murmuring a word in soft Chinese to the bird within, and fanning himself gently and delicately with his ivory fan.

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The juniors watched him, anxious to hear what news he brought, though it was evidently useless to question him. Also, they had a lingering suspicion that he might be an emissary of Tang Wang's tong, getting on board under a pretext, to make some attempt on Wun Lung. The Chinese junior remained below, and the other fellows grouped at the companion door, ready to deal with Mr. Ah if he showed signs of playing tricks. But he showed no such sign.

Indeed, it was difficult to suspect Mr. Ah of being a desperado, with his flowing garments of brocaded silk, his fan, and his birdcage. A man in petticoats was not very alarming—to European eyes.

The juniors were not aware—yet—that in China the women wear trousers and the men petticoats, almost all Western customs being reversed in that strange land. And they did not know that a Chinese bandit, steeped in crime and bloodshed, would wear petticoats and carry a fan, and quite likely a singing-bird in a cage, and amuse himself in his leisure hours by flying a kite. They had much to learn about China.

They waited anxiously for Ferrero Locke to return. But if Mr. Ah, was anxious to see that "honourable lord" he did not betray it. He waited with the infinite patience of a Chinese, and seemed to have no thought at all in his Oriental mind but to fan himself gently and whisper endearing words to his singing-bird.

There was a dash of cars at last, and, to the great relief of the juniors, Ferrero Locke came up the side. But he came alone.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

### Companions in Misfortune!

"H erikay!" groaned Billy Bunter.

For a long time—it seemed an eternity to Bunter—the Owl of the Remove had done little but groan.

It was stiflingly hot in the room where he was imprisoned. It was dim and dusky. There were no windows, but both ventilation and a glimmer of light came from above. Part of the ceiling admitted light. It was not glass, but some semi-opaque substance; and there must have been an opening somewhere, for the air was fairly fresh. Bunter had cast several blinks up at the ceiling. But the walls were bare, and at least ten feet high, so there was no way of climbing out. Bunter had no hope of escaping. He had no hope of anything. He just groaned.

What the beasts had done this for was a mystery to him. If they were Wun Lung's enemies, and after the Chinese junior, what on earth did they want with Bunter? He could not begin to guess. And if they were not that, still what on earth did they want with him? Bunter was of no imaginable use to anybody. It was not robbery they intended—his possessions, such as they were, had been left untouched. It was not murder they meant, even if they could be supposed to have any motive for such a crime. He had not been hurt in any way.

Yet it was clear that the rickshaw coolie had deliberately inveigled Bunter into the rickshaw and carried him off. Not that the man would have known that Bunter would take the rickshaw. Any of the juniors might have taken it. Bunter realised that the trap had not been laid for him specially or purposely. So far as he could see, any member of

the party would have served the kidnapper's turn. It was just Bunter's ill-luck that he happened to be the fellow who had got into the rickshaw.

From the bottom of his fat heart he wished that he had left the vehicle to one of the other fellows!

The coolie, for some inexplicable reason, had wanted to kidnap one of the Greyfriars party. Which one, apparently, he had not cared. Bunter happened to be the one.

What were they going to do with him? Were they going to give him any grub? What did it all mean?

Bunter could find no answers to those questions. He groaned and groaned.

He ceased groaning and quaked, as he heard footsteps approaching the door and heard the bolt withdrawn.

They were coming!

Bunter quaked.

The door opened.

A figure appeared, and was pushed in from without, and the door closed again and the bolt shot.

Bunter blinked.

Another prisoner had been thrown into the hidden room. That was all! Bunter blinked at him in the dimness.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped a voice he knew.

"Nugent!" ejaculated Bunter.

Nugent stared at him.

"That you, Bunter?"

"Ow! Yes," groaned Bunter.

"My only hat! How did you get here?"

"That filthy rickshaw man brought me here in his rotten rickshaw," groaned Bunter. "How did you get here?"

Frank Nugent did not reply for the moment. He moved round the room, examining it, tapping on the walls, and staring up at the glimmering ceiling.

"I say, there's no way out," said Bunter. "I've been here hours and hours. I thought you fellows would be looking for me. You must have been a silly ass to let them get hold of you!"

Nugent grunted.

"There was a shindy—a Malay running amok," he said. "We got separated when we bolted; and I was suddenly collared in a narrow street, and a bag pulled over me, before I knew what was happening. There were three or four of the beasts, I think; but I never saw anything after the bag was over my head—not till they took it off, and bundled me into this room."

"Then you don't know where we are?" asked Bunter dismally.

"Only that we're somewhere in Singapore."

"Fat lot of good that is!" said Bunter, with a sniff.

"Well, don't you know?" asked Frank. "You seem to have come here in a rickshaw, not with your head in a bag. Didn't you see—?"

"All I saw was a lot of filthy streets and filthy niggers," grunted Bunter. "I say, what do you think they've got us for?"

Nugent shook his head.

"Blessed if I know! But they haven't hurt us, anyhow. I hope they haven't got any of the other fellows, too."

Snort from Bunter. He was not bothering about the other fellows. He was fully occupied in bothering about William George Bunter.

"Do you think it's the same gang that are after Wun Lung?" he asked.

Nugent whistled.

"I shouldn't wonder. They were Chinese who bagged me," he said. "But I can't imagine why. They couldn't fancy that either of us was Wun Lung."

"I saw a Chinaman here, when they

(Continued on page 12.)



# "Half-Time" Gossip!



**F**OOTBALL is the magnet which draws the crowds. And the **MAGNET** is the magazine which will once again enable its readers to play the game, and follow the game played by others, intelligently. That's my job!

I am here to intrigue you about football matters; to interest, to amuse, and also to instruct, but I hope the instruction will be interesting. You who were among the regular readers of the **MAGNET** last season will remember the most enjoyable times we had together. You sent me all sorts of questions about football, and I took a sheer delight in answering them.

We all enjoyed ourselves so well that the Editor said "Carry on." I want those readers who wrote to me last season on "big ball" matters to write to me again, and I want those who are new readers to write to me as well. Never mind what your football problem is—a complicated affair of off-side which needs a diagram, or the sine of studs admissible in your football boots—I am here to help.

**T**HE real reason why this feature has been restarted so early in the season is that already the Editor has had some letters addressed to him on football questions.

Jack B., of Gainsboro', says he remembers that there was a lot of talk last season over the question of the goalkeeper standing on the goal-line until the ball had been kicked on penalty kick occasions. Some referees, says this reader, allowed goalkeepers to move before the ball was kicked so long as they did not advance from directly under the posts. Other referees insisted on the goalkeeper standing still. What is the position now?

The rule-makers evidently noticed that there was some confusion in the interpretation of this rule, so they have sent out a special instruction. They have said that the word "stand" means "stand still." So if any referee allows the goalkeeper to move before the ball is kicked when a penalty kick is being taken against his side, he will not be carrying out instructions.

*The goalkeeper must stand still and on the line.*

That's clear, isn't it?

Incidentally, while the big "pro" footballers are suggesting that they should get a bigger bonus for wins in important matches, I have an idea which works the other way. I suggest that every player who fails to score with a penalty kick, when this rule is in strict operation, ought to be fined a pound. A penalty kick under the rule as the authorities now mean it shall be carried out, ought to mean a goal practically every time. So be careful, my full-back friends, and don't give away penalty kicks.

**I**SN'T it funny how certain deficiencies in the rules of a nationally played game should go for years without anybody noticing them, or taking advantage of them.

The rule-makers spotted one shortcoming during the close season. They made a corner kick a free kick within the meaning of the "ten yards" act. In past years it would have been permissible for an opponent to go close up to the taker of a corner-kick, and thus prevent him getting the ball across, and there was nothing in the rules to prevent such action. But nobody ever took advantage of it.

That couldn't be done now, however, for the corner kick has been placed under the general free kick heading, which means that

*The nearest opponent must be at least ten yards away when the ball is kicked.*

One other thing I must tell you about the rules for the present season. Those who make them have sent a special reminder to all the big clubs—and in this way to all the players of the big clubs, of the rule which says "a player is not entitled, by word or action, to show dissent from any decision of the referee."

Wouldn't it be nice if every player of the game remembered this on every occasion throughout the season? What a peaceful time our referees would have to be sure. They would never run the risk of having their coats pulled off their backs; never get a sour look from any player who, having scored what he thought was a perfectly good goal, had it disallowed.

**I**F all the players would carry out this rule—and all the spectators could be induced to carry it out, too—the referee's life would be worth living. Indeed, it would be "money for nothing" to such an extent that I should go back to refereeing myself. Yet, when you get right down to it, this rule merely sets a standard of conduct which ought to be reached by every man or boy who claims to be a true sportsman.

As a matter of fact this rule about not showing dissent from the referee's decision is sometimes broken by players who have a really high sense of sportsmanship. Let me illustrate from an incident which happened in the very first game I saw this season.

A certain side were attacking, and even had a chance of scoring a goal. Suddenly a member of the defending side was hurt and he fell down. On these occasions the referee is, of course, sole judge as to whether the player is sufficiently hurt to justify the game being held up, and on this particular occasion the referee allowed the play to go on.

A member of the attacking side, noticing his opponent on the ground, suddenly swerved round and instead of carrying on the attack, as he should have done, he banged the ball out of play so that the game was stopped while the injured man received the attention of his trainer. That action by the player was loudly applauded by the spectators, and it was, indeed, a sportsmanlike action, judged from one point of view. But by kicking the ball out of play so that the injured man could receive attention the player was, in actual fact, showing that he disagreed with the referee's decision not to stop the game for the injured player to recover.

*"Do you think that a football club, having won promotion at the end of one season, should rely, for the next season, on the players who were responsible for that promotion?"*

This is a question which comes from a Blackpool reader, and I think I can see how the question was inspired.

Blackpool gained promotion from the Second to the First Division last season, and now all the First Division club players will find out all about the breezes which blow over the Blackpool sands in the winter-time.

For this new season Blackpool are relying almost entirely on the players who gained promotion. That is the usual procedure, but I cannot say that it has always paid.

**O**N the other hand, Chelsea, who gained promotion along with Blackpool at the end of last season, have most obviously taken the opposite view. They have secured quite a number of new players, some of them very bright stars with big reputations. Hughie Gallacher, formerly of Newcastle United, and a man who has played for Scotland many times, is the new centre-forward of the Pensioners. Two other Scots forwards have also joined Chelsea—Alec, Cleyns, who played against England in 1919, and Rankin, who has crossed London from Charlton Athletic to Stamford Bridge.

I do not propose to give a direct answer to my correspondent's question as to which is the better policy. What I will ask him to do is follow carefully the showing of Chelsea and Blackpool. And from the results he will probably get his answer.

No more this week, except just to insist that

*I am expecting you to write to me soon more regularly, and in greater numbers, than you did last season.*

**"OLD REF."**

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## THE TERROR OF THE TONG!

(Continued from page 10.)

brought me in," said Bunter. "Do you think he's a tong?"

"Fathead! A tong is a society, an association. He may be a member of a giddy tong. Goodness knows what they're up to!" Frank Nugent sat down on the floor, as there were no seats in the room. "Anyhow, we're not hurt yet, and there's no use crying before you're hurt."

"I'm hungry!"

"Br-r-r-r!" said Nugent.

"Beast!"

Frank sat on the floor, his back to the wall. He was as puzzled as Bunter to know what it all meant, and he realised clearly enough that they were in danger. But, as he had said, it was useless to cry before one was hurt.

Billy Bunter groaned dismally.

It was a relief to him to have Nugent's company in his imprisonment. He was glad to see Frank, so far as that went. But he was dreadfully apprehensive, and he was hungry.

Nugent was thinking chiefly about his friends, hoping fervently that they would not fall into the same hand. He would have given a great deal to know that they were safe back on the yacht.

"I—I wonder what they're going to do with us!" groaned Bunter. "I—I hope they ain't going to leave us to starve!"

"Lucky you had lunch enough for six!" remarked Nugent.

"Ow! I wish I hadn't come ashore at Singapore!"

"Not much use wishing that now, old bean."

"I wish I hadn't started on that rotten trip to China at all!"

"Not much use wishing that, either."

"I'd rather be back at Grayfriars!" groaned Bunter. "I'd even rather be with old Quelch in the Form-room."

"Quelch would be battered!" grinned Nugent. "Keep a stiff upper lip, old bean. We're not dead yet."

"And you don't care a straw!" snorted Bunter, glaring at him through his big spectacles. "You don't care a rap what happens to me!"

"Well, I'm in the same boat, you know," said Nugent mildly.

"Oh, rats!" said Bunter crossly.

Evidently Nugent's misfortune did not strike Bunter as being so serious as his own.

He relapsed into dismal groaning.

The light from above grew dimmer. The sunset was dying out, and night falling on Singapore.

Nugent rose and began to move about the room restlessly. It was weary and irksome to wait for he knew not what in the silent room in that silent house. The minutes passed on leaden wings, and Frank began to wish that, what ever the enemy intended, they would get on with it.

There was a sound at the door at last.

Nugent turned and faced it, drawing a deep breath. Bunter, sitting on the floor, groaned dolorously.

The door opened.

It was dim and dusky in the passage without, but Frank made out the figures of several Chinamen. One of them held a huge, curved Chinese sword that glimmered in the gloom. If Frank had been thinking of trying a sudden rush he gave it up then. There was no chance of escape from the hidden room.

A Chinese servant entered, carrying two lacquer bowls, one in either hand. Bunter started and sniffed. There was an appetizing odour proceeding from the bowls.

The Chinese bowed, bowls in hand, the others remaining outside the doorway, guarding it.

"The noble ta jen sends you rice," said the bearer of the bowls.

"Oh, good!" gasped Bunter, scrambling up.

The Chinaman placed the bowls on the floor. Then he bowed again to the two prisoners.

"I say, what is it?" asked Bunter eagerly.

"Rice," said the Chinaman.

And he backed out at the door, still bowing; and it was closed again, and the bolt shot into place. There was a soft padding of feet without, and then silence.

Bunter gave a start.

"Rice!" he grunted. "Blow rice! Might have given us something decent. Just like the beasts, blow 'em! I say, though, it smells jolly good," he added. Certainly the smell from the bowls indicated that they contained something rather more savoury and substantial than merely rice.

"They're not going to starve us, anyhow," said Frank.

"Thank goodness for that!" gasped Bunter. "I say, that fathead called it rice, but it's something a jolly sight better than rice. I say, it smells jolly good!"

Bunter did not know that "rice," with a Chinese, signified a meal. He sniffed at the bowls appreciatively. They contained some sort of a stew, with small pieces of meat and vegetable floating in it. Bunter sniffed, and sniffed again.

"Good!" he said.

The Chinese apparently knew that white barbarians did not understand the use of chop-sticks, for spoons had been provided. Bunter picked up a spoon and started.

"Good!" he said.

After that remark Bunter was silent, though his jaws continued busy. The Owl of the Remove had, for the moment at least, forgotten that he was a prisoner, his fate uncertain. Bunter's attention was concentrated on the bowl, and he ate and ate, and was comforted.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

### The Ransom!

FERRERS LOCKE stepped on the deck of the Silver Star. His eyes were immediately upon the Chinaman who sat in the deck-chair. Mr. Ah Feng rose to his feet and kow-towed to the deck in salutation. Evidently he recognised Ferrers Locke. Wharton made a quick step forward, his eyes anxiously on the Baker Street detective.

"Any news, sir?"

"None, so far!" answered Locke. "Green, who is this man?"

"A Chink who says he has news of the boys, sir," answered the mate. "He will speak to no one but you, so I let him wait. Wun Lung is safe below," he added.

Locke nodded. He acknowledged the Chinaman's profound salutation with a curt nod.

"Who are you?" he asked crisply.

"My loathsome name is Ah Feng!" answered the Chinaman. "I seek speech with the honourable lord—one of this superb fireship."

"Speak, then. I am Ferrers Locke, as I have no doubt you know. Two boys are missing; what do you know of them?"

"Myself, nothing, O born-many-years-before-me," answered Ah Feng. "But it has been said to me that two honourable

ones have fallen into the hands of certain members of a tong who threaten to slay them with the death of a thousand cuts."

Locke compressed his lips. He knew what that fearful Chinese punishment was like, though the listening juniors, fortunately, did not.

"Who are these men?" asked Locke quietly.

"Your slave cannot say," answered Ah Feng regretfully. "I know nothing, neither do I dare offend a tong. But what has been said to me I repeat to your honourable ears."

Locke's penetrating eyes were fixed on the impassive face of the Chinaman. Ah Feng met his gaze with a gentle smile.

"Where are they to be found?" asked Locke.

"This humble one does not know."

"But you have come here to give me assistance in finding them?"

"So far as this wretched toad can be of assistance to a lord-one born a thousand years ago," answered Ah Feng.

"In what way, then?" asked Locke.

"It has been said to me—I cannot say whether with truth—that the two honourable ones are prisoners of the tong," said Ah Feng blandly. "The tong-men do not desire to harm them. They will release the honourable ones and return them safely to this fireboat, if—"

"If?" repeated Locke.

"If the request be made to them—"

"By me?"

"Not so, O revered old one," said Ah Feng. "By the honourable son of the merchant Wun Chung Lung."

Locke gave no sign. He had expected that. He knew now that Ah Feng was the emissary of the tong governed by the Mandarin Tang Wang, and that the missing juniors had been kidnapped, to be exchanged for Wun Lung.

"And if Wun Lung should make this request by a letter trusted to your honourable hands?" asked Locke.

"That would be useless," answered Ah Feng smoothly. "Only at the request of Wun Lung, uttered by his own pearl-like and priceless lips will the two honourable ones be released."

"Then Wun Lung must see the tong-men?" said Locke. "And after they have released the two boys at his request will they allow Wun Lung to depart in peace?"

"Surely," said Mr. Ah. "Why not?" And he smiled.

"And if I refuse to allow the son of Wun Chung Lung to leave this ship on any pretext whatever?"

Ah Feng fanned himself gently.

"Then I fear, O born-before-me, that the two honourable ones, in a secret place, will die by the death of a thousand cuts," he answered.

"And what," said Locke quietly, "if I detain you on this ship now that you are here, and hand you over to the police of Singapore if the boys are not immediately sent back?"

"The honourable lord-one will not be so unjust, as I, poor Ah Feng, know nothing of this matter, save that I have consented to bear a message. For that I have no hand in the matter is very clear. My house, my shop where I sell jade and ivory, are open to the honourable police, if they desire to search. Your worm-like slave is well known in Singapore. What can you tell the honourable police of me, save that I have brought a message, not daring to refuse the demand of fierce tong-men?"

"It is true," said Locke, "I can prove nothing against you to the police of Singapore, Ah Feng. But on this ship



I am captain, and my will is law, and though I can prove nothing, yet I know that you are chief of the tong-men who have seized the two boys. What if I place irons on your limbs, and keep you a prisoner below decks until the boys are sent back?"

Ah Feng fanned himself again. "If the lord-one is so unjust, poor Ah Feng can only submit," he answered. "Yet I would tell my lord that if I do not answer back to the fierce tong-men they will send no other message, and the two honourable ones will never be seen in life again."

Locke shut his teeth hard. The Chinese, in his brocaded silk, with his fan and his gilded birdcage, looked like a figure out of a comic opera. But the slanting eyes were like cold steel. Locke knew that he was looking at a cold, cool, hard, and desperate man. He knew that the cunning Chinese held all the trump cards. He knew that if Ah Feng did not leave the ship in safety the two missing juniors would be ruthlessly murdered, and that there would not be a shred of evidence to connect Ah Feng with the crime; indeed, no evidence of the crime itself. None but the members of the tong would ever know what had happened to Nugent and Bunter.

"Let us speak plainly, Ah Feng," said Locke, at last. "Men of the Mandarin Tang Wang's tong have

he knew anything of the matter, in which Locke had no doubt that he was leader, under the orders of the mandarin at Canton.

There was a short silence.

Ah Feng occupied it by whispering endearing words to the bullfinch in the gilded cage. Harry Wharton & Co. were looking at him with silent horror. They felt, though they could not be certain, that it was into Ah Feng's own yellow hands that the missing juniors had fallen.

"Listen, O honourable Ah Feng," said Locke slowly, "I take the boy Wun Lung to China, to give him back to his father. Not to save my life can I hand him over to his enemies."

the Baker Street detective. He broke the silence.

"This humble one would not dare advise the lord whose bright countenance dazzles him," he said. "Yet it seems to poor Ah Feng, in his ignorance, that two lives are of more value than one life."

"No doubt!" said Locke. "But you must give me time to think, Ah Feng. I must consider."

"It is not for this poor worm to give the great lord time," said Ah Feng. "I know nothing of these matters, as I have had the honour to tell the pearl-like one who adorns me by speaking to me. But perhaps the tong-men will give my lord time to consider. I cannot say, for I know nothing. But any



Billy Bunter's fat face and spectacles glimmered up at Nugent from under the teak wall. "Ow! Oh! Grooogh!" he grunted. "Gimme a hand, you beast—I'm stuck!" Nugent grasped a fat hand and pulled.

seized on the two boys. They will release them if Wun Lung is given up in exchange, and Wun Lung will be slain. That is how the matter stands."

Ah Feng rustled his ivory fan.

"It may be that the lord-one speaks truth-words," he said. "This humble slave cannot say. I, poor Ah Feng, am a merchant of jade and ivory, and know nothing of these matters. A message is whispered to me by a man whose face, and whose name, I do not know; but I dare not refuse the message because it is from the tong. The tong is very powerful, even in Singapore, which is ruled by the noble and very old English. Poor Ah Feng trembles and obeys when the tong speaks."

Locke breathed hard.

It was impossible to make the Chinaman speak plainly; he was too wary at every point. His meaning was clear enough, but he would never admit that

"But it is not your honourable life that is threatened by these wicked men, O born-before," said Ah Feng. "It is the lives of the two honourable young ones. Perhaps for their lives you will do what you would not do for your own pearl-like life."

"But for the safety of the boys, Ah Feng, I would shoot you dead, like a dog, where you stand!" said Ferrers Locke.

"This humble one has made the lord-one angry!" sighed Ah Feng. "But it is written in the wise books of my people that anger is a treacherous counsellor."

There was another silence. The Chinaman inserted a yellow finger between the gilded bars of the cage and stroked the bullfinch. He seemed far more interested in the singing bird than in his talk with Ferrers Locke. But his cold, glinting, slant eyes watched

message with which my lord honours his slave will be faithfully carried."

"Tell them, then, that I must have time to think," said Locke. "Tell them to send for my answer to-morrow. In a matter of life and death I cannot decide in a moment."

Ah Feng smiled. The juniors, watching him, read that smile. He knew that Locke desired to gain time to search for the missing juniors; and he knew that Locke, and all the police of Singapore, had no chance of finding them.

"My lord's answer shall be given," said the Chinaman, bowing. "When the tong-men come to me in secret, with their faces hidden, and ask what my lord has said, I will tell them the pearl-like words he has uttered. But, perhaps, they will ask me whether the son of Wun Chung Lung remains at Singapore. I know not, knowing so

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(Continued from page 13.)

little of these matters; but if they ask such a question what shall your slave say in reply?"

"Tell them that Wun Lung remains; that my ship stays in this harbour, and Wun Lung in the ship. In the morning I will answer."

"All this I will say, O born-before!" said Ah Feng, and he kow-towed to the deck and returned to his saropan.

The dragon-sail was hoisted again, and the sampen glided away in the deepening sunset. Ah Feng, with his hand on his knee, fanning himself delicately. And Harry Wharton, with his heart like lead in his breast, looked in silence at Ferrers Locke.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

### Hope!

**S**NORE!

Billy Bunter, curled up on the floor in the hidden room in the house of mystery, was asleep.

Nugent could not sleep.

He had eaten little; and Bunter had obligingly finished his bowl for him. Bunter declared that it was good; and he finished it to the last spoonful. After which, as there was nothing more to eat, the fat junior curled up and went to sleep.

He slept and snored, while Frank moved restlessly about the room. Above there was only a dim glimmer of starlight on the semi-opaque square in the roof. Again Nugent had groped over the walls, the door, in the faint hope of finding some chance of escape. But the walls were of solid wood. Nugent had a pocket-knife in his pocket, but it could have done nothing more than scratch the hard teak-wood of the walls. The floor was the bare earth.

Snore!

Nugent was glad that Bunter could sleep, for the fat Owl's sake. But he could not close his own eyes.

From the silent house no sound reached his ears. It was past sunset now, and apparently they were left for the night. Long, long weary hours were before him; and what was to follow?

That by this time they were searched for, that Ferrers Locke would leave no stone unturned to find and rescue them, Nugent was sure. But he had little hope. They were hidden away in the native quarter of Singapore, in the midst of a maze of lanes and alleys and native houses and huts, and there was no clue to guide the rescuers.

For what purpose they were held prisoners Frank had not yet guessed. But he could not doubt that they were in the power of Wun Lung's enemies—the tong of which the Mandarin Tang Wang was the chief. And he knew, beyond the possibility of doubt, that they were in the shadow of death.

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Like a caged animal Nugent moved restlessly about the room, while Bunter snored.

He threw himself down at last, weary and dispirited, and pillowed his head on his arm and tried to sleep.

He closed his eyes, but sleep would not come.

In the silence and stillness of the room there was a faint sound of scampering and rustling, mingled with the snoring of Bunter.

Nugent did not heed it for a time. But suddenly he gave a cry and started up as something soft and slimy touched his face. As he started up a scared rat scuttled away from him, and for a second Nugent caught the gleam of its green eyes in the gloom.

He shuddered.

The scampering and rustling ceased. There had been several of the rats; but they had been scared away by Nugent's movement.

He did not lie down again. The thought of rats crawling over him as he laid was too horrible.

But as he moved about a new idea began to work in his mind. The rats were gone, and evidently they had a way of ingress to the hidden room, and scuttled out by the way they had come. There was some sort of an opening in the room—if only a rat-hole.

He found it in a few minutes.

Under one of the walls was a hole of two or three inches in diameter, and a smell of the rats lingered in it.

Nugent opened the largest blade of his pocket-knife, and backed and scraped at the earth round the hole, enlarging the opening.

Then he thrust his hand into it under the wall.

He had guessed already, and now he was sure; the teak wall rested on the surface of the ground, without any sort of masonry foundation.

His fingers told him, as he groped, that the wall was not more than two inches thick. There was space beyond, evidently in the next room.

Nugent's heart thumped.

Kneeling by the wall, groping through the hole he had enlarged his fingers were actually in the adjoining room. He had no doubt that that room was unoccupied—for two reasons: there was no glimmer of light from the hole and the rats had come that way.

"My hat!" breathed Nugent.

The floor, though caly of earth, was stamped hard; it felt as hard as bricks under his feet. But once the surface was broken it was softer underneath.

With his knife gripped hard, Nugent backed and backed at the rat-hole, loosening the earth, and then dragging it away with his hands.

To enlarge the opening sufficiently to allow him to crawl through into the adjoining room, that was the thought in his mind. His heart was beating with renewed hope.

He backed and jabbed and tore at the loosening earth, and dragged it away in handfuls. It was hard work; it was hot; and the dust that rose almost choked him. But he kept on manfully.

For half an hour he worked with scarce a pause; and by that time he could pass his whole arm through the hole under the wall. He found, too, that there were large stones mixed in the earth, which he loosened and dragged away bodily.

He desisted at last, perspiring, choking with dust, but more than ever hopeful. He crossed over to Bunter and shook him by a fat shoulder.

"Groooogh!"

"Wake up, Bunter!"

"Ow! Beast! 'Tain't rising bell!" mumbled Bunter.

Nugent shook him again.

"Wake up, you fat idiot!"

Bunter's eyes opened, and he blinked drowsily at Nugent.

"Wharrer marrer! Lemme alone!"

"Wake up, fathead!" snapped Nugent impatiently. "I've found a way out. We've got a chance of getting out of this!"

"Oh!" said Bunter. And he sat up and rubbed his eyes, groped for his spectacles, and jammed them on his nose. "I—I say, have they left the door open, or what?"

"No, see! Listen!" Nugent hurriedly explained, and struck a match to show the hole he had excavated under the teak-wood wall.

Bunter blinked at it.

"We can't get through that!" he said.

"We can if we make it larger!"

"All right, old chap! Go ahead!" said Bunter. "I say, you'll have to make it fairly large—I'm not skinny like you, you know. Wake me up again when you've finished."

"You fat idiot!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"You're to help, you fat chump! My arms are aching already, as if they'd drop off. Lend a hand."

"Oh, don't be a slacker, you know," said Bunter. "Get down to it, you know! Stick to it! I—I—I'd watch you."

"You fat villain! Take this knife and take your turn."

"I—I'd rather go to sleep while you do it, old chap! I—I think you can do it better than I can. The fact is, I'm tired. I—yarooooogh! Wharrer you kicking me for, you beast!"

"I'd kick you into small pieces if you don't get up and work!" hissed Nugent. "Can't you understand that we're in danger of our lives! Do you want your silly head cut off to-morrow?"

"Groooogh!"

"Pile in, you fat chump! I tell you it's a chance to get clear—if we can get into the next room we may get out of the house—"

"I—I don't think there's much in it, old chap! I—I think perhaps we'd better leave it till the morning. You see—whooop! If you kick me again, you beast—"

Nugent kicked him again and again. Billy Bunter scrambled to his feet. He was sleepy, but there was evidently no sleep for Bunter. Bunter could sleep under most circumstances, but not with a fellow kicking him in his fat ribs.

"Ow! Chuck it, you beast!" he gasped. "I'll help—I want to help! I'll help like anything. Ow! Keep off!"

"Go it, you fat slacker!"

Bunter groaned, took the pocket-knife, and started. Nugent rested for his next effort, kicking Bunter occasionally when the fat junior slacked down. With many a grunt and a groan the Owl of the Remove worked till Nugent was rested and once more took the knife from him.

Bunter settled down to sleep again. He reposed on the floor for about a tenth part of a second, and then a kick roused him up.

"Ow! You beast!" he gasped.

"Stick to it, you fat fool!" snapped Nugent. "Scrape away the earth while I hack it loose."

"I—I say, I'm afraid I should be rather in your way—yarooooh! If you kick me again—wow! All right—I'm scraping the beastly stuff away, ain't



"Mind you don't cut my fingers. Ow! Oh dear! I wish I was at Greyfriars."

"Shut up, you idiot—they may hear you—"

"Beast!"

And they worked in silence; Nugent hacking the earth loose under the wall and Bunter's fat hands dragging it away into the room. In silence, save for the dismal groans and grunts of Billy Bunter. Even to save his fat life Bunter did not like exertion. But there was no help for him, he had to take his share, and he groaned and grunted and laboured.

## THE NINTH CHAPTER.

### The Escape I

O H dear!" groaned Bunter. "Keep going!" "Oh lor!"

Bunter kept going—he had to. The harder and longer he worked the more Nugent's hopes rose. He knew now that, given time, he could work his way into the adjoining room, and the night was yet young. The hope of escape spurred him on and steelled him against fatigue and weariness.

Bunter, certainly, wanted to escape. But he was tired and sleepy, and at the best of times his fat brain was not very active. But for Nugent's constant urgings Bunter certainly would have given up the task and settled down to sleep again.

But Bunter had no chance of doing that. A shove or a kick started him again when he slacked. Frank Nugent was going to save himself, and save Bunter, if he could. And the work had to be done—hard, and hot, and dusty, unpleasant and laborious, it had to be done. Nugent was spurred on by hope, and Bunter by Nugent's boot or knuckles. So, sometimes in turns, and sometimes together, they laboured on, and the excavation under the teak-wood wall grew.

A stack of displaced earth was growing behind them, dragged away by Bunter's fat hands as Nugent hacked it loose. Dust filled the air and their noses and lungs. Bunter coughed and gurgled pathetically, hoping that those sounds of suffering would make Nugent understand that he really ought to do the work while Bunter rested and snored. But Frank paid no heed to Bunter's sounds of woe.

He put in at least twice as much work as Bunter, and he put it in without complaint. Bunter, undoubtedly, complained enough for two.

And Nugent was rewarded when at last he tested the excavation and found that he could squeeze through it.

It was a close squeeze; but he thrust himself through and squeezed up on the other side of the wooden wall.

In the next room he looked about him and listened. It was quite dark; there was a window, but it was thickly shuttered. Nugent struck a match and spotted the doorway, which was covered by a kind of lattice, a good deal like a venetian blind, in place of a door. He breathed more freely as the match went out. The way from the room lay open as soon as he was ready.

"I say!" A thrilling whisper came through the hole under the wall. "I say, you beast, don't you go away and leave me! I say—"

"Quiet!" hissed Nugent.

"Oh, all right, if you're still there! I say, I can't get through—I'm not a skinny worm like you—"

"You fat octopus! Work on that side while I work on this, and we'll soon have it large enough for you—"

"Buck up, then!" gasped Bunter.

Bunter's desire to "chuck it" left him when he found himself alone in the hidden room. He did not want to be left behind in the power of the tong when Nugent went. His fat hands worked industriously at last, scraping away earth to add to the pile behind him.

The excavation was already large enough for any fellow but Bunter to squeeze through. But Bunter needed plenty of space. For another hour they worked on either side of the wall. Both were hot and perspiring and bone-weary; but the irksome task was done at last. Billy Bunter made an effort to squeeze through, and his fat face and spectacles glimmered up at Nugent from under the teak wall.

### RAISE A LAUGH and WIN A PENKNIFE like

F. Greenaway, of 24, St. Annes Road, Bebbacombe, Torquay, S. Devon, who has sent in the following winning effort:



### OBEYING ORDERS!

The keeper strode up to the little boy who was fishing in the lake.

"I say, my lad," he said sternly, "can't you read that notice? It says: 'No fishing allowed.'"

"It's quite all right, sir," said the youngster, with a smile. "I'm not fishing aloud. I'm doing it on the quiet!"

It's as easy as shelling peas if only you try!

"Oh, good!" gasped Nugent. "Come on!"

"Gimme a hand, you beast—I'm stuck!"

Nugent grasped a fat hand and pulled. Bunter grunted and snorted like a grampus, and wriggled like a worm, gasping and spluttering. His fat circumference was caught; but with an effort he squirmed through and rolled out beside Nugent.

"Ow! Oh! Grooogh! Oh dear! You beast, you nearly pulled my arm off! Oh crikey!"

"Shut up!"

"Blow you! My arm—"

"Quiet, you silly idiot! If they hear us—" hissed Nugent.

Bunter groaned in a lower key.

They sat on the floor for a good ten minutes to rest, exhausted by hard labour. Nugent was the first to move. He rose to his feet and pulled at Bunter.

"Come on," he said. "It can't be far from morning now. We've got to get out before anybody wakes up."

"Ow! I'm tired!"

"Get a move on."

Nugent groped to the latticed doorway. Bunter rolled behind him. Quietly Frank drew back the slats and looked out.

Almost opposite him was a window of oiled paper, through which a faint light glimmered. It was the gleam of early sunrise. The night had been spent in undermining the teak wall.

There was no sound in the house. But Nugent realised that there was no time to loase; he knew that the Chinese are early risers. He passed out into the passage, Bunter following him on tiptoe.

A sound of steady breathing came from an open doorway. Nugent glanced in.

Two coolies lay asleep on sleeping-mats on the floor. Both were sleeping soundly.

Bunter's eyes gleamed behind his spectacles, as he recognised one of them as the rickshaw man who had entrapped him. But he was very careful to make no sound.

They passed on, on tiptoe.

Apparently there was no one else in the house. As a matter of fact, this old building in the slums of Singapore was a good distance from the residence of Ah Feng, the ivory and jade merchant. Ah Feng was much too cunning to have the prisoners in his own house, which was quite likely to be searched by the Singapore police and Ferrers Locke. Ah Feng, at that moment, was more than a mile away, sleeping peacefully; and, if he was dreaming, certainly not dreaming that his prisoners were escaping.

Nugent reached the arched door on the courtyard; it was of solid, heavy teak, barred by two bars of the same hard wood, dropped into iron sockets. It had no other fastening. Slowly, softly, Nugent raised a bar and laid it on the floor; and then the other. The door opened to his hand.

"Oh crikey!" breathed Bunter. His eyes danced behind his spectacles. Before him lay the courtyard into which the treacherous rickshaw-man had brought him the previous afternoon.

They passed quietly out; and Nugent shut the door silently. He looked round him. Overhead, the dusky sky was turning to a pearly grey at the approach of dawn.

"I know the way!" gasped Bunter. "There's the door that rickshaw beast brought me in by. This way."

He scudded across the courtyard to the low door set in the wall. It was barred; the bars were removed in a few seconds. The door swung open, and they stepped out into the alley beyond. Nugent closed the door in the wall with a gasp of relief.

"This is the way they brought you?" he whispered.

"Yes," breathed Bunter.

"Right or left?" asked Nugent.

"I—I can't remember—"

"Fathead!"

"Oh, really, Nugent—"

"Come on—we've got to hurry, and we shall have to chance it! This alley must lead somewhere."

Nugent started down the f. hy, for a smelling alley at a run, and Bunter panted after him. It led into another alley, and then into a narrow street. So far, they had passed no one; but now three or four Malay sailors came swinging along, and they stared curiously at the two.



"Put it on," said Nugent. "We want to get out of this."

"I—I say, I'm winded—"

"Fathead! Come on."

"Beast!"

Nugent ran, and Bunter puffed and blew after him.

Escape from the maze of narrow, dirty streets was a difficult matter; but the chief thing was to put a good distance between them and the prison from which they had emerged. Possibly the two coolies who had been left on guard there would not miss them when they awoke, on the other hand, they might, and if there was pursuit, a whole swarm of Chinese ruff-raff might join in it. Nugent panted on, and Bunter puffed and blew, and blew and puffed, and, somehow, kept pace.

They emerged into a broader street at last, then into a wide street shaded by trees. Singapore was beginning to wake now; there was rosy red in the eastern sky. A little fat Burmese driving a donkey-cart came along, and he stared at the two juniors and grinned. They were smothered with white dust from head to foot, dust was thick in their hair, and caked in perspiration on their faces. The little Burmese seemed amused.

Nugent, struck by a sudden thought, held up his hand to the man. The donkey-driver halted.

"Wanter carriage, sah?" he asked. "This gharry carriage, sar, very cheap. Speak English, sar! You want go? Yes! Ten dollar."

"Drive us to the harbour," said Nugent.

"You belong one ship, sar? Yes, sar! Ten dollar, sar, this gharry carriage, sar."

Nugent was not disposed to haggle about the fare. He nodded, pushed Bunter into the gharry, and followed.

The Burmese crashed his stick on the donkey, and the gharry rattled away at a good speed.

"Thank goodness!" gasped Nugent.

"Yes rather!" gurgled Bunter. "We shall get on board in time for brekker after—"

"What?"

"Brekker!" said Bunter.

Nugent laughed.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER.

### After Darkness—Light!

**H**ARRY WHARTON leaned on the rail of the Silver Star, and stared towards the shore with haggard eyes.

Dawn was breaking over Singapore; verdure-clad hills were flushed with rosy light, white walls peeped out from the green, the blue waters glistened in the sunrise. Like a picture unrolled, Singapore spread out before his sight.

Wharton's eyes had not closed during the night.

Ferrers Locke was absent from the yacht. The juniors knew that he was busy ashore—with the Singapore police. The night was all that Ferrers Locke had to work in, in the morning Ah Feng was coming to the Silver Star for his answer.

Gladly, eagerly, the chums of Greyfriars would have joined in the search. But Locke had bidden them remain on board; and they had obeyed. They knew, too, that their aid would have been useless. In all the city of Singapore, they did not know where to begin to look for the missing juniors.

Ah Feng's ivory and jade shop could be easily found, but it could not be supposed that the kidnapped juniors

were there. Doubtless it had already been searched.

Wharton, thinking of his chum, ached with anxiety and apprehension. His best chum—his first friend at Greyfriars, and his best! Gladly, joyfully, he would have taken Frank's place in his unknown prison, in the hands of the tong. He could not do that—he could do nothing to help him—he could only wait, in heart-breaking anxiety.

For it was borne in upon his mind that he would never see his chum in life again. Ferrers Locke was losing not a moment; but where was he to seek the missing schoolboys? He had all Singapore to choose from. At Ah Feng's place, it was certain, they would not be found; and watching the ivory merchant was futile, for it was fairly certain that since his visit to the Silver Star, he would keep very clear of the place where the juniors were imprisoned.

It was Ah Feng's game to pretend that he was merely a messenger—carrying a message for the tong-men, because he dared not refuse. Indeed, it might be the truth, and not a pretence at all, for all Wharton knew. Anyhow, there was nothing to be gained from Ah Feng, and other clues there were none. Nugent and Bunter had simply vanished without leaving a trace behind.

Locke had gained time, that was all. In the morning he had to answer—and his answer meant death to the prisoners.

For it was, of course, inconceivable that Wun Lung should be handed over to death to save them. Their lives could not be ransomed with the life of the Chinese junior. Dear as his chum was to him, Wharton could not have thought of that. Ah Feng had laid his plan cunningly; but he would fail, so far as that went. And that was death to the prisoners—death, probably, by torture—death by the "thousand cuts," a hideous form of execution known only in China.

Wharton groaned aloud as he thought of it.

Bob Cherry joined him at the rail. He had not slept either. His usually ruddy face was pale.

"Where there's life there's hope, old man," said Bob huskily. "Locke may have found—"

Wharton shook his head.

"There's a chance!" muttered Johnny Bull.

"There is a chance, though it is enormously small!" said Hurree Singh, shaking his dusky head.

Wharton gripped the rail with his hands.

If only a fellow could have done something! He was tempted to call a sampan, and go ashore, in spite of Ferrers Locke's orders. Locke had pointed out that the enemy would be on the alert, and that the kidnapping of another member of the party would only add to the difficulty. It was likely that Ah Feng had intended to get more than two of the schoolboys; likely enough, that a good many of the rickshaw coolies who had hauled the juniors the previous day had been in his employ. Bunter and Nugent had been seized; but probably the others had escaped narrowly. Likely enough, if the juniors wandered about the city again, slanting eyes would be watching them.

"If we could only get news—" muttered Wharton.

"Mr. Locke will be back soon," said Bob.

"If he comes without Nugent, I shall go ashore!" said Harry.

Bob Cherry nodded. He also had made up his mind on that point.

Little Wun Lung came on deck. His almond eyes looked to the shore, and then rested on the tormented chums.

"Mistel Locke no come yet!" he said.

Wharton shook his head.

"He come soon," said Wun Lung. "Me no tunkes he findes Flanky, findes Buntos! But you no wolly along Flanky. Me goey."

"What?"

"Allee light!" said Wun Lung. "Me no lettes tong-men kil, poo, ole Flanky 'stead of this Chinese! Ah Feng, he savvy! Ah Feng Chinese—he savvy Chinese plenty. Me goey along Ah Feng!"

The juniors stared at him.

"You—you mean, you'd give yourself up to 'lang Wang's men to save Nugent?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"What you tunkes!"

"You can't, you young ass! Mr. Locke would not allow you to do so, for one thing."

"Me savvy! Me goey along Ah Feng. 'S'posen Mistel Locke no findes pool ole Flanky!" said the Chinese junior quietly. "S'posen my fathes bels, he sayes me go. Chinese no 'fraid die! No can lettes fathes die in my place! That no Chinese way! S'posen ole Flanky no come, me goey."

The juniors gazed at him in silence. It was evident that Wun Lung was in earnest. The peril was his, and he would not allow it to fall on his friend. The juniors wondered whether, had Mr. Wun Chung Lung been there, he would have allowed his son to make the sacrifice. It was likely enough. And they realized that Ah Feng had calculated more cunningly than they had supposed.

"You can't!" said Wharton.

Wun Lung smiled faintly.

"S'posen you could takee places belong Flanky, you takee?" he asked.

"Yes!" said Harry, with a deep breath. "Goodness knows, I'd jump at the chance."

"Me jumpes!" said Wun Lung.

Wharton shook his head.

"The villains! The rotters!" muttered Bob miserably. "Hallo, hallo, hallo! That's a sampan coming this way. Is it Locke?"

The juniors stared towards the sampan that was gliding out to the yacht. Harry Wharton clutched the rail, his head reeling.

Was he dreaming?

"Frank!" he muttered huskily.

Bob Cherry gave a yell.

"Flanky!" gasped Wun Lung. His almond eyes opened wide as he stared at the gliding sampan.

Wharton, giddy, hardly believing his eyes, held on to the rail and stared at the sampan. There were a couple of Malays in it, but Wharton's eyes were fixed on a figure that stood up—a figure covered with dust—and waved. It was Frank Nugent.

A fat figure squatted beside him in the sampan. The strengthening sunlight glimmered on a pair of large spectacles. A fat hand was waved to the juniors staring over the rail.

"Frank!" panted Wharton.

"Holy smoke!" ejaculated Mr. Green. "There are the boys! Mr. Locke is not with them—what the thunder—"

Wharton swung himself on the rail and made a flying leap into the sampan as it glided alongside.

"Frank! It's you—it's really you—"

"You bet, old bean!"

"I say, you fellows—" squeaked Billy Bunter.

"But what—how—what—did Locke find you—"

"No, we haven't seen him," Nugent pressed his chum's hand. He could read



in Wharton's face what he had been through that long and terrible night. "All serene now, old chap."

"Thank heaven!" breathed Wharton. "I say, you fellows, you might help a chap on board—"

Billy Bunter was helped on board. Hurree Singh threw a handful of silver to the boatman. On deck, the juniors surrounded Frank Nugent, almost hugging him. Even now they could hardly believe that they saw him again, alive and well. It seemed like a miracle to them.

It did not take long for Nugent to tell his story. Billy Bunter did not help him with it. Bunter had rolled below, in search of breakfast. Bunter's voice was heard:

"Steward! Where's that man Rawson! Steward! I say, I'm hungry! Steward!"

The juniors grinned. For once they were glad to hear the voice of William George Bunter.

Mr. Green had already sent a man ashore with a message for Ferrers Locke. Nugent went below to get a bath and a change, which he badly needed. Bunter was not troubling about a bath or a change, which he needed quite as much as Nugent. Trifles like those could come later. Bunter was eating. His wild adventures in Singapore had had no effect on Bunter's appetite. Caked with dust, Bunter sat at the table and fed. The juniors kept him company while they waited for Nugent.

"I say, you fellows! I've had nothing to eat since you saw me last—except a bowl of Chinese stew! It was all right, I'll say that, but there wasn't enough! I'm famished! I don't think I should have been strong enough to save Nugent, but for that bowl of stew! I think it was mutton—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at!" Bunter crammed his mouth, and was silent for a moment. "I say, you fellows, the Chinese can cook! They gave us a bowl of grub each—luckily. Nugent didn't want all his! I think it was mutton—but I fancy there was pork in it, too. Has Nugent told you what it tasted like?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. They could laugh now, and they laughed loud and long.

Bunter looked puzzled.

"I say, carve some more ham for me, Wharton—"

"Certainly, old chap!"

"Shove the tomatoes this way, Bob!"

"Here you are!"

"Cut some more bread and butter! That ass Rawson only cut about a dozen slices! Put the butter on thick! Good! I say, you fellows, I've had an awful time. But for that bowl of grub—"

"Make up for lost time now, fatty!" said Harry.

"What-ho!" said Bunter.

He did not need urging. He was making up for lost time at a great rate. Frank Nugent, newly swept and garnished, came in, and his chums hurried to supply him with good things. Never since the Silver Star had steamed out of Marseilles had there been so merry a party in the saloon. When Ferrers Locke arrived, he was greeted by the sound of laughter and merry voices, and there was a smile on the Baker Street detective's face as he came below.

He was never more pleased to see Nugent and Bunter. The latter, he had endeavoured to send back to Greyfriars many times; but to see him now, safe and sound, was like a tonic to Ferrers Locke.

## THE ESCAPED PRISONERS

### A Surprise for Ah Feng!

**T**HE dragon-sail, bright with paint, gleamed in the morning sunshine—the blazing sunships of Singapore. Across the shining waters of the harbour the sampan glided lazily. Mr. Ah Feng, seated on a heap of cushions, fanned himself with a fan of ivory, painted with a spray of lilies.

for Ferrers Locke's answer, evidently in complete ignorance of the fact that the prisoners had escaped and were now on board the yacht. And for that reason, Locke had told Nugent and Bunter to remain below.

Locke had wondered whether Ah Feng would come, and he had believed that he would. And if he came, the Baker Street detective did not intend to enlighten him too soon. Had Mr. Ah



The four Chinese came scrambling up the side of the yacht, to the rescue of their master. But four seamen with belaying-pins stood ready, and the Chinese were knocked back without ceremony!

This time Mr. Ah came without his birdcage, but his fan was in evidence, and beside him lay his umbrella. Placid and plump, Mr. Ah reposed at ease on the cushions, smiling gently when faces looked at him over the rail of the Silver Star.

Ferrers Locke watched the sampan grimly. Mr. Green, the mate, grinned. And four members of the Famous Five, who were on deck, smiled to one another.

Mr. Ah Feng was coming on board

seen the escaped juniors on deck, undoubtedly the dragon-sail would have been promptly shifted, and the sampan would have given the yacht a wide berth. That was not what Ferrers Locke wanted. He had something to say to Mr. Ah Feng—and something to do—now that the juniors were safe.

Locke glanced round at the mate, and spoke a few words in a low voice. Mr. Green nodded and grinned, and spoke in his turn to a couple of seamen. The



two men kept near at hand, and one of them kept in his hand a short, knotted rope.

The Baker Street detective turned towards the sampan again, watching the leisurely approach of Mr. Ah Feng.

"By gum!" murmured Bob Cherry. "That yellow merchant is going to bag a surprise this morning!"

"The surprisefulness is going to be terrific!" remarked Murree Jamset Ram Singh.

Harry Wharton smiled; but there was a glint in his eyes. His feelings were not amicable towards the man who had kidnapped his chum.

"That blighter hasn't the faintest idea that Franky and Bunter have got away, and that his game is up!" remarked Johnny Bull.

Mr. Ah was a cunning man, but in this instance his cunning had rather over-reached itself.

He knew, of course, that he would be under police observation, and he had been very careful not to go near the place where the two prisoners had been confined. He knew that that hidden den in the Singapore slums would never be disregarded by the police; and as for the escape of the prisoners, that he had not thought of as a possibility. Evidently the two coolies who had been left on guard had not brought word to the Chinaman of the escape.

It was possible that they had not yet looked into the prisoners' room and found that they were gone. It was possible that they had strict orders not to approach Ah Feng's residence unless sent for. But it was more likely that they had discovered the escape, and dared not report it to their master. For there was little doubt that the tong would inflict death on the wretches who had failed in their trust, and so had

rendered all the plotting of Ah Feng useless.

Ferrers Locke had little doubt that the coolies had discovered the escape of Nugent and Bunter, and that, instead of informing Ah Feng, they had fled in terror from Singapore, knowing that death would be their portion at the hands of the tong.

Obviously, Ah Feng knew nothing yet. He was coming back for Locke's answer to his demand. He was going to receive an answer that would surprise him.

Locke had no time to waste at Singapore on Ah Feng. Neither was there proof, good enough for a court of law, that Ah Feng was an active agent in the kidnapping. His pretence that he was acting as a messenger, under fear of threats, was plausible enough. It was Locke's intention to deal with him personally and drastically. When the Silver Star steamed out of Singapore harbour, Mr. Ah would be left with ample and painful reason to remember her visit.

The sampan drew alongside, and the dragon-tail dropped. The accommodation ladder slid down for Mr. Ah. The Chinaman came lightly on board.

Locke did not give him even the curtest of nods in acknowledgment.

"This humble one greets your honourable lordship!" said Ah Feng politely. "His loathsome eyes are brightened by looking upon your distinguished countenance."

"You have come for my answer?"

"I crawl at your honourable feet, and wait for your excellent word. O born-before-me!" answered Ah Feng.

"Listen," said Ferrers Locke. "I do not think you believe that you have deceived me, Ah Feng. You are the agent of the Mandarin Tang Wang.

You are the head of the tong in Singapore, and it was by your order that the two boys were kidnapped and taken to an unknown place."

"Who am I to dispute the saying of so great a one?" asked Ah Feng. "Yet before a noble British judge, can this be made good?"

"Probably not," said Locke.

"In Singapore we live under the noble justice of the British," said Ah Feng.

"Even so humble a worm as the one that crawls at your venerable feet is protected by that all-seeing justice. What do I know of this matter? Nothing! I bear a message from a man who hides his name and his face—a man I know not. I fear to disobey one who calls himself a tong man. That is all, Born-before-me. Surely, then, harm cannot come to poor Ah Feng from a noble British justice court!"

"Quite so," agreed Locke.

And Ah Feng smiled again.

"I wait with humble patience for the answer of the honourable lord," he said. "This answer I will give to the unknown tong men when they come to ask. Of this matter I know no more. It does not concern me, a humble merchant in jade and ivory."

"I will give you my answer," said Locke.

He made a sign to Mr. Green.

The mate and the two seamen stepped forward, and in a moment Ah Feng was secured in their strong grasp.

With all his cool, cunning self-possession, Ah Feng was taken by surprise, and the placidity of his yellow face broke up into a glare of distorted rage as hands were laid on him. For jade merchant as he was, Ah Feng was a "ta jen"—a gentleman of China—and the grasp of hands—especially foreign hands—was an unforgivable insult to such a man. The rage of a demon flashed in his eyes and burned in his face for one moment; then he was calm

"Hold the scoundrel fast!" said Locke.

Ah Feng controlled his fury. But, in spite of his self-control, the rage of a fiend glittered in his slant eyes. Still, his voice was calm as he spoke.

"What does the great one mean?" he asked. "Why is poor Ah Feng seized upon like a common coolie? Does not the noble and distinguished lord desire me to take his answer back to those who have forced me to carry a message?"

"I repeat that you have not deceived me, Ah Feng," said Ferrers Locke. "I have no time to waste on you; but you shall not escape punishment for having dared to lay hands on white ones, and dared to utter threats to me. You are going to be thrashed like a dog and flung into the sea. 'Trice him up!'"

A rope secured the Chinaman's wrists to a stanchion.

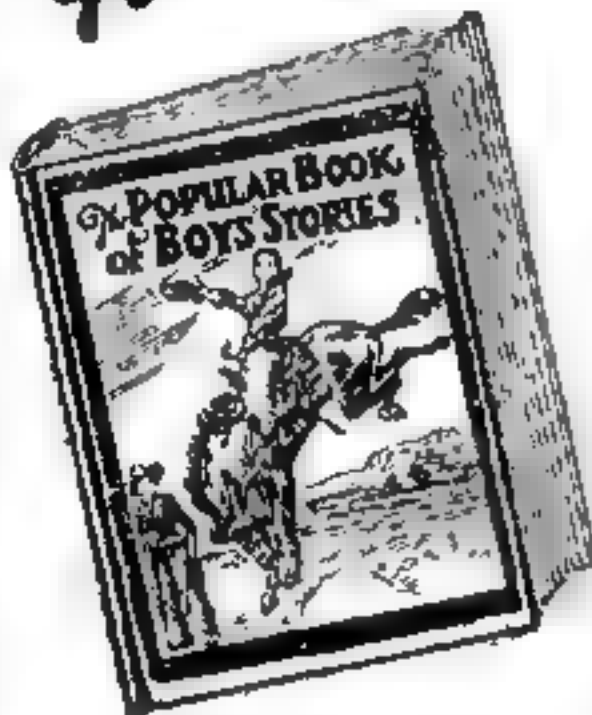
Then the self-control of the Chinaman broke down. The Chinese are perhaps the calmest race on earth, but they are subject to sudden outbursts of fury, in which all the savage ferocity of Oriental blood finds full play. Ah Feng struggled, yelled, screamed, and cursed.

There was a shout from the crew of the sampan, of surprise and alarm. There were four of them, all Chinese. At the maddened yelling of Ah Feng they came scrambling up the side of the yacht to the rescue of their master. But all was ready for them. Four seamen, with belaying-pins, stood ready, and the Chinese were knocked back into the sampan without ceremony.

There was no rescue for Ah Feng.

"Give him three dozen, laid on hard!" said Ferrers Locke to the seaman with the knotted rope.

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A terrible yell broke from Ah Feng as the first blow fell. It was not the pain, but the humiliation, that made him writhe. Harry Wharton & Co. almost shuddered at the expression on his face as he glared at Ferrers Locke.

"Foreign dog!" howled Ah Feng. All his suave politeness was gone now. "English toad! Vile son of a scavenger dog! For this the lives of the young ones shall pay! They shall die by the death of a thousand cuts! Even for the son of Wan Chung Lung I will not spare them! They shall die under the knife, and twenty-four hours shall be the time of their dying!"

Lash! The knotted rope descended on the back of the writhing, yelling Chinaman. Lash, lash, lash!

It was difficult to recognise Ah Feng now as the smooth, suave Chinaman of a few minutes ago. He writhed and howled like a madman, shrieking out curses and bloodcurdling threats. Even yet he believed that the two kidnapped juniors were in his power, and he screamed out the tortures he would inflict on them. All pretence and disguise was abandoned now, all cunning and caution. Under the thrashing of the rope's end the suave Chinaman had turned into a howling savage. He yelled and raved and threatened, foaming at the mouth.

Lash after lash descended—three dozen in all. Then the writhing wretch was cast loose.

"Throw him into the sea!" said Locke. And in the grasp of the seamen, the yelling Chinaman was tossed over the rail.

His crew dragged him into the sampan. With his brocaded silk robes drenched, and sagging round his limbs, the Chinaman squatted in the sampan, gasping with fury, his face livid. He glared up at the yacht, trying to speak, choking with passion. All that was left him was the prospect of a fearful revenge on the two prisoners whom he still believed to be at his mercy in the hidden house. But there was yet one more blow to fall on the defeated agent of the mandarin.

"Nugent! Bunter!" called Locke. Frank Nugent and Billy Bunter came up from the saloon. They came to the rail, and looked over at the sampan. Ah Feng looked at them. His slanting eyes almost started from his livid face. His jaw dropped.

"Soondre!" said Ferrers Locke. "The boys are here—and they are safe! If they had been harmed, you should not have escaped with a lashing! Go, you dog! Get out of my sight!"

Ah Feng sank back on the cushions. He understood now, and he seemed to crumple under his overwhelming defeat. He turned his face away, and the sampan glided back to the shore.

It was the last that the Greyfriars party saw of Ah Feng. An hour later, the Silver Star was steaming out of Singapore, bound for the China Sea.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

### In the China Sea!

"I SAY, you fellows, how far is it from Singapore to Hong Kong?"

"More than a thousand miles."

"Oh crumbs!"

"To be exact, one thousand four hundred and forty!" said Bob Cherry, "and probably a few extra rods, poles, or perches."

"Oh dear!"

Billy Bunter leaned back in the canvas deckchair and grunted. It was a brilliant day in the China Sea. That sea, famed for its sudden storms, was calm

and smiling now; the Silver Star cut her way through placid blue waters, under a cloudless sky. In the distance the smoke of a big passenger steamer loomed against the blue; in another direction a Chinese junk rolled lazily before the wind. But for these, the Greyfriars voyagers had the China Sea to themselves.

"This is a long trip," said Bunter. "I'm not complaining, you know—I'm prepared to sacrifice myself for you fellows, as you know. But it's a jolly long trip. I'll be jolly glad to put my feet on dry land again. I'm getting fed-up with seeing nobody but you fellows every day."

## GREYFRIARS CORRESPONDENTS.

### No. 12.

Here's another snappy poem by the Greyfriars rhymester. Be it master, senior, or fag, he treats 'em all alike. This week he selects Mr. Quelch, Form master of the Remove.

**D**EAR CORA—I fear you won't bless me  
For having neglected my needs;  
But with manifold problems to press me  
I've not had a moment of peace!  
The life of a Lower Fourth master  
Is crowded with duties and cares;  
Making furrows come faster and faster,  
As well as a host of grey hairs!

My pupils aren't peaceful and placid,  
My cane's never long unemployed;  
No wonder my manner is acid,  
No wonder I'm often annoyed.  
Such hardened young rascals as Skinner,  
Such slow-witted scholars as Stott,  
Have made me decidedly thinner,  
And aged me a terrible lot!

And then there is Bunter, remember,  
He's been a sore trial of late;  
He tells me the Fifth of November  
Commemorates Alfred the Great!  
His ignorance, dear, is abysmal,  
He eats sticky sweets in a mass;  
No wonder I'm doleful and dismal  
At having such boys in my class!

"What a coincidence!" remarked Nugent. "We feel just the same. As a matter of fact, Bunter, you're in luck."

"Eh? How's that?"

"Well, you've only got to put up with us. We've got to put up with you!" explained Frank.

"You cheeky ass—"

"Well, just think how awful it would be if there were another fellow like you here, and you had to put up with him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's what you call gratitude, I suppose!" sneered Bunter. "You've forgotten already how I got you out of the hands of that Chink beast at Singapore."

"I haven't forgotten how I got you out of his hands, and had to keep on

kicking you to let me get you out, you fat fraud."

"Fatter ole Bunter velly funnee!" smiled Wun Lung.

"Well, if you land in trouble at Hong Kong, don't expect me to get you out of it, that's all," said Bunter. "You can cackle—"

"Thanks, we will! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, shut up!" said Bunter peevishly. "I say, it's filthy hot in the China Sea. Which of you fellows is going to fetch me a lemon-squash?"

"The whichfulness is terrific."

"Echo answers which!"

"After I've saved your life, Nugent,



When lessons are over, my Cora,  
The fingers of Duty still beck;  
I find myself staid before a  
Big budget of papers to check.  
Exams are the bane of existence  
To masters, as well as to boys;  
I envy you, dear, at a distance,  
Surrounded by pleasures and joys!

But when I have posted this letter  
I'll have a whole hour to myself;  
And then, feeling brighter and better,  
I'll take down a book from the shelf.  
And, deep in the stories of Dickens,  
Forget I was feeling so glum;  
Already I find my pulses quickens  
At prospect of pleasure to come!

Enclosed you will find a remittance,  
A ten-shilling Treasury Note;  
'Tis willingly spared from myittance,  
I promised it when I last wrote.  
I know you'll expend it discreetly  
(Dear me! It is time for the post);  
And now I ascribe myself neatly,  
"The Uncle who loves you the most!"

I think you might fetch me a lemon-squash!"

"So I will—after you've saved my life!" agreed Nugent.

"Beast! Talk about the thankless tooth of a serpent's child!" said Bunter bitterly. "Next time a Chink gets hold of you, Nugent, don't rely on me to rescue you."

"I won't!" chuckled Nugent.

"I hope I shall get treated a bit more decently when we get to Chunky Bang's place at Hong Kong," said Bunter. "Blessed if I like being the guest of a yellow heathen, but I suppose there's no choice in the matter. What sort of a place has Chunky Bang got at Hong Kong, Wun Lung?"



"No savvy Chunky Bung."

"I mean your father, you young am."

"Name belong father, Wun Chung Lung."

"Well, what's the difference?" grunted Bunter. "Chunky Bung and Wun Chung Lung are much the same, ain't they?"

"No samees."

"Rot!" said Bunter. "One silly idiotic name is as good as another. What do you Chinese have such fat-headed names for?"

Wun Lung did not answer that polite question. Bob Cherry made a restless movement with his right foot.

It was hot, very hot, in the China Sea, and there was no doubt that it was a long trip on shipboard. Bunter was irritable. The least these fellows could do, he considered, after all he had done for them, was to make him as comfortable as possible. Yet not one of the beasts would get out of his chair to fetch Bunter a lemon-squash. They knew that Bunter did not like heaving himself out of his chair, when once he had settled down in it, especially after a meal. There was no doubt that they knew that. He had told them so, often. Yet there they sat, indifferent, leaving him lemon-squashless. Bunter was used to this sort of selfishness, but it did not, of course, soothe his irritation.

"Are they cannibals in China, Wun Lung?" he resumed.

Wun Lung's slanting eyes flashed for a moment. But he answered imperturbably:

"No cannibal! Chinese man no eat fat Bunter, unless tunkoo Bunter one little fat piggee."

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Bob Cherry. "You won't be safe in China, Bunter. I've read that the Chinese are very fond of pork."

"I suppose you think that's funny!" snorted Bunter. "Look here, lend me your fan, Wun Lung! It's beastly hot."

The little Chinese hesitated a moment, and then passed Bunter his ivory fan.

"No bleakes," he said.

"If I break it, I'll give you a tanner for it!" sneered Bunter, and he fanned himself vigorously.

"That fan's worth a fiver at least, you fat bounder," said Harry Wharton. "Mind how you handle it!"

"Rats!" said Bunter.

He fanned himself vigorously, too vigorously. There was a sudden crack from the delicate fan.

"You bleakes my piece fan!" ejaculated Wun Lung sorrowfully.

"The rotten thing snapped! Take it away—it's no good!" Bunter tossed the broken fan back to Wun Lung crossly. "I say, you fellows, can't you find me a fan somewhere?"

"I'll find you a boot, jolly soon!" said Johnny Bull, in a sulphurous voice.

Bunter grunted and was silent for a few moments. But William George Bunter was never silent for long.

"You haven't told me what sort of a place Chunky Bung—I mean Wunk Chunk Lung—has at Hong Kong," he said.

"Father belong me, no lives along Hong Kong," said Wun Lung. "He live sometimes Shanghai, sometimes Canton. Now he stop along Canton."

"Well, isn't Canton at Hong Kong?" demanded Bunter. Bunter's ideas of Chinese geography were very hazy.

Wun Lung grinned.

"You silly ass!" said Harry Wharton. "Hong Kong is a British settlement at the mouth of the Che-Kiang—the Canton River. Canton is a Chinese city a long way up the river."

"Plenty great city!" said Wun Lung.

"Me tunkoo my friends likes see great"

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city Kang-lung, what you call Canton."

"My hat! Is Kang-tung the Chinese name of Canton?" asked Bunter. "What a jaw-cracking language! How the thump do you silly idiots in China understand one another?"

Bob Cherry glanced round at his chums.

"I suppose we mustn't drop him overboard," he said. "Let's trot about a bit! I can't stand any more Bunter."

The Famous Five left their deck-chairs and walked about the deck for a change—from Bunter. The Owl of the Remove grunted, and having nobody upon whom to inflict his conversation, he closed his eyes behind his big spectacles and went to sleep.

Wun Lung watched him for a while with a grin on his yellow face. Then he glided quietly below.

He came back in a few minutes, and squatted on the deck behind Bunter's chair. The juniors, strolling by, glanced at him curiously. Wun Lung had a needle and thread in his hand.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Bob.

The little Chinese glanced round and put his finger to his lips. Then he resumed plying needle and thread.

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob. "He's sewing Bunter's clobber to the chair!"

The juniors chuckled and strolled on. Snore!

Bunter's snore did not drown the throbbing of the engines, but it was quite a powerful rival. The Owl of the Remove slept soundly, while the yacht glided on, on an even keel. Wun Lung, squatting on the deck, worked with the patient industry of a Chinese. Yards and yards of strong thread were sewn in, while the unconscious Owl snored.

Bunter was still snoring when Wun Lung had finished. Not till the steward sounded the gong to announce that tea was ready in the saloon did Bunter awaken. His eyes opened behind his spectacles, and he gave a deep and prolonged yawn.

"Yaw-aw-aw-aw!"

He removed his spectacles, rubbed his eyes, replaced his spectacles, yawned again, and grunted. Then he rose—or, rather, essayed to rise. To his utter amazement the deckchair rose with him, as if it was glued to him, and Bunter sprawled back again. Then there was a howl.

"Owl! I say, you fellows! Help!"

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Not an Easy-Chair!

"H A, ha, ha!" "I say, you fellows—" "Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors yelled. Even the sailormen chuckled. Even the gruff Mr. Green, casting a surprised eye on Bunter, grinned.

Bunter was struggling to get out of the canvas chair. But the chair clung to him like a limpet to a rock. When Bunter rose the chair rose. His collar, the slack of his jacket and trousers, were all sewn securely to the canvas, and Bunter could no more get away from that chair than one Siamese twin could get away from another.

What on earth was holding him to the chair Bunter did not know. He struggled to his feet, and the chair lifted behind him. He sat down again heavily, with the result that the chair folded up and flattened out on the deck, with Bunter flattened out on top.

The roar that came from Bunter rang

far over the China Sea and the Gulf of Siam.

"Yaroooh! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the matter with this beastly chair?" shrieked Bunter. "It's sticking to me."

"The stickfulness is terrific."

Bunter tried to get up. He rolled over sideways, got on his hands and knees with the chair on his back, and struggled to his feet. He stood tottering, with the canvas chair clinging to him.

"I say, you fellows, lend me a hand!" he yelled. "This beastly chair is sticking to me somehow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter grabbed at the chair behind him and strove to drag it off. But the canvas was too firmly sewn for that. The Chinese are industrious and thorough workers, and Wun Lung had done his work well. That chair was not to be wrenched off.

"Lend me a hand, you beasts!" howled Bunter. "I say, what's happened to this chair? What's making it stick?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I can't get out of it—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you beasts, I can't talk about with a chair on my back!" shrieked Bunter.

"Looks to me as if you'll have to!" chortled Bob Cherry. "That chair's sticking to you, Bunter, like a hell to a jolly old snail."

"Beast! I say—"

"Come down to tea, chair and all!" suggested Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you fellows—"

But the fellows did not heed. They went below chuckling. Wun Lung stood curled up with merriment, and Bunter yelled to him.

"Come and help me, you eastly heathen! Do you hear me, you yellow rotter? Lend me a hand, you heathen savage."

"Fatter ole Bunter velly muchee top-side polite!" chuckled Wun Lung. "S'posse me heathen savage, me no helpee."

"I—I mean, lend me a hand, dear old chap."

"Bunter goey eaten cokes!" answered Wun Lung, and he followed the drums of the Remove below, unmoved even by his sudden promotion from a heathen savage to a dear old chap.

"Beast!" roared Bunter. "Oh dear! What's the matter with this chair? What is the beastly thing sticking to me for? Where's that fool of a rate? Where's that silly idiot Green?"

"Eh?"

"Oh, I—I didn't see you!" Bunter spun round, and the chair spun with him. "I say, lend me a hand, Mr. Green—"

"You don't want help from a cl and a silly idiot!" said Mr. Green grimly.

"Yes, I do—I mean you ain't a fool or a silly idiot! I say, lend me a hand to get out of this beastly chair, it's sticking to me somehow. I say, don't walk away while I'm talking to you."

But Mr. Green did walk away.

"Lend me a hand, you grinning dummy!" yelled Bunter to a chuckling seaman. But the man did not lend a hand. Perhaps he did not like being addressed as a grinning dummy.

Bunter rolled desperately to the saloon stairs. The chair swung behind him, part of it trailing on the deck as he moved. He slipped his fat arms out of his jacket in the hope of getting rid of the weird encumbrance. But the canvas was firmly sewn to the back of



His brocaded silk robes drenched and sagging round his limbs, Ah Feng was dragged into the sampan.



his trousers also, and the chain still adhered. Seldom did anybody or anything cling to Billy Hunter as if it could not bear to part with him. But that canvas chair did.

It clattered behind him as he rolled furiously to the cabin stairs. He left the men on deck in convulsions. He plunged down the steps, but was suddenly stopped. The long-framed chair being now only secured to the slack of his trousers, it had naturally fallen sideways, and its length was too wide for the width of the stairs. It jammed across the doorway and held Bunter back.

He clutched hold of the handrail and dragged. But the canvas was stout, and Wun Lung's sewing was thorough. He dragged in vain.

"I say, you fellow!" shrieked Bunter. "Ha, ha, ha!" floated up from the saloon.

"I'm stuck—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, you beasts! One of you beasts fixed me to this chair. I know that! Come and let me loose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts!" roared Bunter.

He backed on deck—there was no other way—grasped the chair, and turned it lengthwise, and started down the stairs again. This time he got through, and tramped down, the chair clattering along with him.

Ferrers Locke came along from his cabin as Bunter arrived in the saloon. He stared blankly at the crimson, perspiring fat junior, as he staggered in with a collapsible—and collapsed—chair dangling behind him.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Locke. "What ever have you done this for, Bunter? What a very extraordinary prank!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass!" roared Bunter.

"What?"

"I—I mean, it's fixed to me! It got fixed to me somehow while I was asleep. I can't get it off!"

Ferrers Locke stared, and then burst into a laugh.

"You utterly absurd boy!" he exclaimed. "I suppose this is some sort of a practical joke! Your clothes are sewn to the chair!"

"Oh crikey!"

"You boys had better lend Bunter your assistance, I think," said Ferrers Locke, and he went up to the deck, laughing.

"All hands!" chuckled Bob Cherry, taking a grasp on the chair. "Lend me a hand with the chair, Johnny! Franky, you and Wharton hold Bunter by the ears."

"Yaroooooh!"

"Somebody must hold you, fathead, if we're to pull the chair off! One of you hold his ears and one his nose!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Leave my ears alone!" shrieked Bunter. "Leave my nose alone, you beasts!"

"Well, hang on to his hair—"

"Yooooop!"

"We must hold you somewhere, fathead!"

"Beast! Leggo my hair!"

"There's no satisfying some people," said Bob Cherry. "Hold him somewhere. Now then, go it! Pull devil, pull baker!"

Wharton and Nugent held Bunter. Bob and Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh wrenched at the chair. Many hands made light work. The stout canvas and the stout sewing held; but something had to go, and it was the trousers that went. There was a rending sound, and Bunter was free.

"Oh crikey! Oh dear! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You cackling rotters! I say, you

fellows, there seems to be a beastly draught here—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "You'd better go and change your trucks, Bunter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. He gave a blink at the large patch adhering to the canvas of the chair, and rolled away to his state-room. He left the Greyfriars juniors almost in hysterics.

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

### Very Hot Coffee!

"THIS," said Bob Cherry, "is something like!"

The other fellows agreed that it was.

It was evening, and they were taking their evening coffee on deck. A myriad brilliant stars glittered in the dark blue vault overhead, mirrored in a sea that seemed as calm as a lake. The throop of the Silver Star's engines was the only sound on the vast, shadowed sea.

Northward the yacht throbbed on through the soft tropical night, under the blazing stars—Singapore far behind, Siam somewhere far away to port, Hong Kong still many a long hundred miles ahead. Even Johnny Bull, the practical, hard-headed one, was influenced by the soft loveliness of the night, and began to think of poetry and music. He mentioned that he was sorry he hadn't brought his concertina, at which his comrades shuddered, and thanked their lucky stars that he hadn't.

Bunter sat morose.

Bunter did not seem to have recovered from his adventures with the chair that had clung to him so fondly. He frowned, and brooded, and cast dark

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and morose glances at the cheery, smiling Wun Lung. Bunter had said several times that he would make the heathen Chinese sit up, for having sewn him down and spoilt his trousers.

No doubt Bunter was thinking out ways and means. He sat silent and morose.

The steward arrived with coffee on a tray. Billy Bunter blinked at him, and a gleam came into his eyes behind his spectacles.

The sight of the coffee cups seemed to have brought an idea into the fat junior's labouring brain.

"He, he, he!" he ejaculated suddenly.

"Hello, hello, hello!" Bob Cherry looked round. "Is that one of Wun Lung's fire-crackers going off?"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"My mistake, old bean! Enjoying life, what?"

"He, he, he!" It was clear that Bunter was entertained about something, though it certainly was not clear what it was.

"Well, what's the jolly old joke?" asked Bob.

"Oh! Nothing! I—I wasn't thinking of anything, you know. I'm not going to play a trick on Wun Lung."

"Oh, my hat!" said Bob blankly, and the juniors chuckled.

Bunter rolled from his seat and disappeared below. Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another and grinned.

Bunter, evidently, was up to something. They wondered what.

He came back to the deck, when the steward had handed round the coffee-cups. Each of the fellows had a saucer resting on his knee, and Bunter's coffee stood on a little bamboo table.

"Take sugar, Wun Lung, old chap!" asked Bunter.

"No takeo sugar, tankee."

"Well, take milk, then?"

"No takeo milkeo, tankee."

"Oh!" said Bunter.

The juniors tried to suppress their smiles. Bunter, with great cunning, was evidently trying to get at Wun Lung's coffee, for some reason known only to his powerful brain.

He was at a loss for a moment or two. But Bunter's potent intellect was working at high pressure now, spurred on by the desire to make the heathen Chinese sit up.

He gave a sudden lurch, and collided with Wun Lung, and knocked his coffee over. The cup went to the deck with a crash and a smash.

"Oh, sorry!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't do that on purpose, you know!"

"My only hat!" said Harry, gazing at the Owl of the Remove. He gazed also at a tin of mustard, which Bunter fondly believed was concealed under a fat arm.

"Buntee velley clumsie donkee!" said Wun Lung.

"Look here! Don't bother to call the steward. I'll fetch you another cup!" said Bunter.

"Great pip!"

Had not the juniors been aware that some great thought was working in Bunter's pougy brain, they would have guessed it now—it was so extraordinary for Bunter to offer to do anything for anybody. Wun Lung's almond eyes glimmered with suppressed merriment.

"Buntee velly good!" he said.

"Not at all, old fellow," said Bunter. He took Wun Lung's saucer, and rolled away with it. The juniors gazed after him as he disappeared.

"What on earth is the benighted chump up to?" breathed Bob Cherry.

"Something frightfully deep!" grinned Nugent.

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"The deepfulness is terrific!"

"He's got a tin of mustard!" gasped Wharton. "I suppose he's trying to bung it into Wun Lung's coffee—under Wun Lung's nose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Buntee velly funnee," said Wun Lung. "Playee tick on pool lill' Chinese. Velly funnee ole fat Buntee."

Bunter came back to the deck, bearing a fresh cup of coffee in the saucer. He handed it to Wun Lung, who took it amiably.

"Me tankee Buntee velly muchee," he said gravely.

"Not a bit, old chap!" grinned Bunter. "I say, that's nice coffee! Really good! Rather hot, perhaps! He, he, he! Mop it up, old bean!"

"Buntee dloppee half-crown!" asked Wun Lung suddenly. He fixed his glance on the deck just past Bunter.

"Eh? Yes. Rather! That's my half-crown!" exclaimed Bunter at once. "In fact, I heard it drop!"

He spun round to pick up the half-crown.

The moment his back was turned, Wun Lung reached out towards the bamboo table, and changed his coffee-cup for Bunter's.

Five pairs of eyes were on him as he did so, and five tongues remained silent.

But five faces wore ecstatic grins.

### LOOK, LADS! Another reader wins LEATHER POCKET WALLET!

Though Potter and Greene  
both confess  
That of "jaw" Coker has an  
excess,  
Yet, when Horace stands less,  
These two chums will agree  
He's the right kind of pal to  
possess!

The above winning Greyfriars  
Limerick was sent in by: F. Davis,  
46, Vernon Road, Edgebaston,  
Birmingham.

Bunter's eyes were not on him, of course. Bunter's eyes were on the deck, searching for the mythical half-crown.

"I say, where is it?" demanded Bunter. "I can't see it. I know I dropped a half-crown. It's mine. You fellows needn't make out it's yours. It's jolly well mine! Where is it, Wun Lung?"

"Me makee lill' mistake," said Wun Lung. "No half-crown, only starshinee. Me velly solly."

"You silly chump!" granted Bunter.

He turned back to the table and sat down. He took his cup of coffee—or rather, Wun Lung's cup of coffee, which stood in his saucer—dropped five lumps of sugar into it, and stirred. Over the coffee-cup he blinked at the Chinese.

"I say, you're not drinking your coffee," he urged.

"Me drinkee soonee."

"You needn't think I've put anything in that coffee," said Bunter, to make assurance doubly sure, as it were. "I wouldn't."

"No tinkee," said Wun Lung.

"As for mustard," said Bunter, "I shouldn't know where to look for it, even if I wanted any."

"Oh clumbe!"

"Drink it up, old chap," urged Bunter. "Don't let it get cold. Not that I think it will get very cold! He, he, he!"

"Ain't he a jewel?" gasped Bob Cherry. "Ain't he a prize packet? Ain't he a Machiavelli? Ain't he the deepest old card ever?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, you fellows—"

Wun Lung sipped his coffee. Bunter watched him with eager interest. In his keen interest in Wun Lung he was letting his own coffee get cold.

Slowly but surely the Chinese junior drank the coffee. Bunter stared at him. He had expected Wun Lung to gasp and gurgle, and almost explode, at swallowing a cup of coffee charged with mustard. Wun Lung did not turn a hair. Certainly, he would have turned a hair, if not a whole pigtail, had he swallowed the coffee Bunter had doctored for him. But that doctored coffee was now in Bunter's own hand, though the fat and fatuous Owl was happily unconscious of it.

"Well, my hat!" said Bunter, in utter disgust. "Those blessed heathens must have insides lined with brass."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Did—did that coffee taste all right, Wun Lung?"

"Allee light!" answered Wun Lung blandly. "Velly nicey coffee."

"Well, my hat!" said Bunter.

He gave a snort of disgust. However, he remembered his own coffee, which was getting cold by this time—as cold as coffee could get with a large dose of mustard mixed with it. Evidently, his little trick had failed; how, Bunter could not guess, unless, indeed, the heathen Chinese had an inside lined with brass.

Every eye was fixed on Bunter, fascinated, as he raised the cup of coffee to his mouth.

Bunter did not sip. It was Bunter's way to take things aboard in bulk. He started with his usual large mouthful. Then:

"Yurrrrrgggggh!"

Crash! The coffee-cup went to the deck. Smash! The saucer followed it. Thud! The chair went over as Bunter leaped wildly to his feet.

"Yurrrrgh! Gurrgrgh! Grooogh! Oooooop! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors.

Bunter had got the mustard!

Evidently, it was hot!

"Yaroooh! I'm poisoned! I'm burning! Whoop! Help! Water! Fire! Murder! Yoop! Yaroooogh! Gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Groooooorooooorrrrrp!" gurgled Bunter. "Mmmmm! Urrrrrgh!"

"Hot stuff!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, you fellows, I—I'm chook-chook-choked! Grooogh! How did the mustard get in my coffee? Yaroooogh! Woooooooh!"

Spitting frantically, Bunter staggered away in search of a tap, to wash out his scorching mouth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A yell followed him as he went.

"Gug-gug-gug!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

When Billy Bunter came back to the deck smiling faces greeted him. But Bunter was not smiling. Indeed, for a long time Billy Bunter seemed to be understudying that ancient king who never smiled again, as the Silver Star continued on its journey.

THE END.

(Next week's MAGNET will contain another thrilling yarn in this novel new series, entitled: "THE SCOURGE OF THE RED DRAGON!" Make sure of your copy, chums, by ordering it in good time.)



THRILL FOLLOWS THRILL IN THIS GREAT WAR STORY.

# THE FLYING SPY!

By GEO. E. ROCHESTER.

INTRODUCTION ON PAGE 26.)

Guy Tempest has one chance in a thousand of obtaining the necessary evidence to prove that the accusation made against him is false . . . but he's staking everything on that thousandth chance!

## In Field-Gray!

**R**ETURNING to the wrecked Fokker, Guy seated himself. How long he would have to wait until someone came he did not know, but he knew that the burning Sopwythe would attract attention, as the flames and smoke must be visible for many miles.

An hour had almost dragged its weary length when, with a sudden grinning in his eyes, the boy rose to his feet. Hurrying towards him, some distance away as yet, was a squad of soldiers. They came up, led by a sergeant, square-jawed and brutish, and wearing the cap button of the Army of Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria.

"You have crashed, Herr Leutnant!" said the sergeant gutturally, coming rigidly to the salute.

"Is that not obvious, fool?" retorted the boy.

The sergeant glanced towards where the dungaree-clad body of Zwolle was lying near the smouldering wreck of the Sopwythe scout.

He was not to know, nor did he guess, that Guy had carried the dead Zwolle there. And, naturally, he took the latter to be the pilot of the burnt-out scout.

"He is an Englander, that one, Herr Leutnant?" he said questioningly.

"Jawohl!" assented Guy. "We fought. He crippled my machine. But before I crashed I sent him down in flames!"

There came a rumble of admiration from the half dozen soldiers standing behind the sergeant. Like him, they did not for one moment doubt the identity of the stern-faced boy clad in the field-gray uniform of the German Air Force.

"Where are you from?" demanded Guy harshly of the sergeant.

"We are attached to a mobile anti-aircraft battery, Herr Leutnant," explained the sergeant. "We pulled up on the road five kilometres distant when we saw the smoke of the Englander's burning machine."

"I will return to the battery with you," said Guy curtly. "Leave a man on guard here!"

The sergeant did so, and Guy accompanied him and the remainder of the squad across the five kilometres of moorland, which had to be traversed in order to reach the road.

The battery consisted of two anti-aircraft guns mounted on lorries which had been drawn up in front of a long, grey hut, which was obviously a wayside depot.

"By our orders, Herr Leutnant," said the sergeant, "we remain here till noon. If you wish it food will be prepared for you."

"I do wish it," responded the boy.



"Leutnant Felbe," said Baron Karlmann, addressing Guy Tempest, "you bear a remarkable resemblance to a certain notorious traitor—Guido von Sturm!"

He entered the hut, which was furnished with a long trestle-table and stiff-backed, wooden chairs. Around the walls were iron bunks arranged tier on tier. A cooking stove at one end of the room and a large store cupboard completed the furnishings, with the exception of a telephone attached to the wall.

"Where do you go when you leave here?" Guy demanded of the sergeant, as the latter placed before him a cup of acorn coffee, a chunk of black bread, and a slab of amixed cheese.

"We patrol towards Saarbrücken, Herr Leutnant," responded the sergeant.

Guy nodded.

"That is fortunate," he said, "for I am from the military aerodrome at Saarbrücken. I will accompany you on the lorry until we meet with some faster conveyance along the road."

"Very good, Herr Leutnant," replied the sergeant.

With a snap salute he withdrew, leaving Guy alone with the indigestible food and his thoughts.

The boy was feeling a grim satisfaction with the way things were turning out. It was in order to be unquestionably accepted as the pilot of

the wrecked Fokker that he had deliberately burned his Sopwythe scout.

In any case, it would have been a perilous business flying that scout any farther over German territory. For its red, white, and blue markings, identifying it as an Allied machine, would have made it the object of savage attack by every German machine sighting it.

If he could reach the military aerodrome at Saarbrücken without being suspected—or without being recognized as the one-time Guido von Sturm—he might, under cover of darkness, be able to obtain possession of a machine bearing on wings and fuselage the German identification mark of the Iron Cross.

If he could possibly get hold of a German machine his journey to Berlin would be shorn of many of its perils and difficulties.

For to Berlin he was determined to go. Somewhere in the archives of the German Intelligence Bureau in the Wilhelmstrasse must be evidence that Pedlar Zor had been sent to France, not as an associate nor as a colleague of Guy Tempest—but to assassinate him.

And the boy was grimly determined to obtain that evidence and return with

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it to France in order to prove that the accusation made against him—Pedlar Zor had been vilely false.

There was also the paper which he had taken from the library of Dr. Zolhoff that fateful night when he had forced the truth of his birth from the man whom, since infancy, he had looked upon as his guardian and his friend. That paper bore full and comprehensive details of the German espionage service in Britain.

Guy knew where it was, and he was equally determined to return with it as added proof that he was, heart and soul, with the cause of England.

Guy realised to the full that the mission he had set himself was one fraught with the deadliest of peril. He had one chance in a thousand of penetrating to Berlin and returning in safety to the line.

But it was on that thousandth chance that he was staking everything!

Finishing the makeshift meal, he threw himself down on one of the bunks and snatched a brief two hours' sleep.

Awakening refreshed in mind and body, he indulged in a cold juice, then emerged from the hut and seated himself on a bench outside.

It was a fine, clear morning, with white, fleecy clouds drifting lazily high in the blue. The German anti-aircraft gunners were lounging by their mounted guns, the tarpaulins of which had been pulled off ready for action. The long, tapering muzzles were pointing upwards ready to hurl exploding shrapnel at any Allied machine which, flying eastwards into Germany, might come within range.

"I have reported your crash by telephone to Strasbourg, Herr Leutnant," said the sergeant, saluting. "A salvage lorry is already on its way!"

Guy nodded idly. The news filled him with no perturbation, for it was extremely unlikely that any aboard the salvage lorry from Strasbourg knew the real Zwölfe.

Suddenly he tensed. Faint and far away, high in the sky to westwards, came the faint drone of aero-engines. The sergeant heard it, his trained ear detecting at once a scarce perceptible note in that distant, muffled drone.

"Englishers!" he ejaculated. "D.H.9's!"

Wheeling on his men, he barked: "Stand to your guns!"

Instantly the German gunners became briskly alert.

"You see, Herr Leutnant," explained the sergeant eagerly, "we have our guns trained on that cloud." He pointed upwards. "You observe it, yes? Well then, we will fire when the English dogs pass beneath it, or pass into it. We cannot miss!"

"Cannot you?" exclaimed Guy, with a slow smile.

"Nein! We cannot!" retorted the sergeant confidently. "Watch, Herr Leutnant, and you will see that I am right. Ah, there they come! D.H.9's, as I said!"

Flying so high in the sky that they seemed but slow-moving specks, a squadron of D.H.9's, flying in close V-shaped formation, had emerged into view.

Whipping powerful field-glasses to his eyes, the sergeant watched the on-

coming machines intently for a few moments whilst the gunners, tense by their guns, awaited his orders.

"Hold your range!" he rapped, glasses still pressed to his eyes.

On came the machines, holding a course which would take them underneath the white, slowly moving cloud on which the anti-aircraft guns were ranged.

"Here they come, Herr Leutnant," chuckled the sergeant, "right into the trap which I have laid for them—"

Then, harshly to his men:

"Prepare to fire!"

Guy watched with interest, his eyes following the flight of the British formation. He saw the machines reach the fringe of the cloud and become starkly silhouetted against its white background—

"Fire!" screamed the sergeant.

The anti-aircraft guns roared into action, and, as though by magic, puffs of smoke, token of exploding shrapnel, appeared round the formation of D.H.9's.

"Keep firing, you scum!" bellowed the sergeant. "Ah, look—the English dogs seek the cover of the clouds!"

"Naturally!" murmured Guy, with an amused smile as the British squadron leader lifted his formation in a steep climb into the cover afforded by the cloud.

The manoeuvre was such a simple and such an obvious one that the sergeant might have expected it. But apparently he hadn't, for, thrusting his glasses back into their case, he shook a clenched fist towards where the machines had disappeared.

"Curse you!" he roared. "I hope you meet some of our Fokkers up there—"

"Sergeant!" rapped Guy sternly.

The sergeant relapsed into abashed silence.

"Cease fire!" he ordered sullenly, turning to the gunners. "They will have altered their course to avoid our shrapnel!"

The firing died away; and so also did the faint, pulsating drone of the formation continuing its flight eastwards.

"So much for a braggart!" said Guy curtly, rising to his feet and turning away.

The reprimand got home, the sergeant flushing a dull crimson. Donner! But there were times when he hated these whelps of officers.

The remainder of the morning passed uneventfully, and as noon approached, the gun tarpaulins were lashed into place and preparations were made for continuing the patrol towards Saarbrücken.

Prompt at noon the lorries moved for-

## THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Having forced the truth from Dr. Zolhoff, his guardian, that he is of British birth, Guy Tempest, hitherto known as Von Sturm, Germany's most brilliant aviator, reaches the British lines with a paper containing information of the most vital importance to England. Swearing allegiance to England, Guy is given a commission in the British Royal Air Force. Fearing the consequences, Dr. Zolhoff, who is chief of the German Secret Service, orders Pedlar Zor, a famous German spy, to get rid of Guy. The spy is caught in Guy's quarters and places Guy in a cruelly false position by claiming him as a friend and confederate. Determined to clear his name Guy makes a break for freedom, boards a plane, and flies over the German lines. Encountering an enemy plane he sends the machine hurtling down in a death spin. Landing beside the wreckage of the Hun plane Guy dons the dead pilot's clothes and, taking possession of his papers, deliberately sets fire to the British machine.

(Now read on.)

ward, and with them, clad in the field-grey uniform of the Fatherland, went Guy Tempest.

## At the Cafe in the Ladenstrasse I

**E**VENING of that same day found the Baron Karlmann feeling extremely pleased with himself and life in general.

A tall, lithe, fair-haired individual, this Baron Karlmann; a dandified, scented Prussian. But one possessed of courage. For had he not thirty-seven Allied machines to his credit?

Since the passing of Guido von Sturm there were those who hailed the Baron Karlmann as the greatest German War ace of the day.

He had landed late that afternoon at the military aerodrome on the outskirts of Saarbrücken, and now, in a cafe in the Ladenstrasse, he was seated at table, the guest of honour at a cosy little dinner.

His admiring hosts were four pilots from the aerodrome—the Hauptmann von Arn, the Leutnant Larm, the Leutnant Zobel, and the Unter-offizier Kern.

The dinner was turning out to be very successful indeed. Wine was flowing almost as fast as talk, and the five were becoming more hilarious than was compatible with either the rank they held or the uniform they were wearing.

Seated watching them at a near-by table was Guy Tempest, in the uniform which he had taken from the dead Zwölfe that morning. Deliberately Guy had moved from the table he had selected on entering the cafe to one nearer the jovial quintette.

And now, as he sat covertly scanning their flushed and laughing faces, he was satisfied that, with the exception of the Baron Karlmann, he had met none of them before.

He had met the Baron Karlmann on one occasion, two years beforehand at Mannheim Aerodrome. Whether or not the baron would recognise him as the notorious Guido von Sturm, Guy did not know. But it was a risk the boy was prepared to take, for somehow or other he intended to get into conversation with these pilots who were so obviously from the aerodrome.

After all, he had only spoken a few moments with the Baron Karlmann at Mannheim, and two years of war can change a man and wipe out recollection.

So, pushing back his chair, Guy rose to his feet and crossed to the baron's table.

"The Baron Karlmann, I believe!" he said, with a stiff bow.

A sudden silence fell on the five. The baron stared up at Guy with cold, inquiring gaze.

"Yes!" he said curtly.

Guy smiled, although his every nerve and muscle was taut.

"You do not remember me?" he said.

"No!" retorted the baron.

"I do not! And yet—"

He broke off, a puzzled look dawning in his eyes.

"I am the Leutnant Felbe," said Guy, giving a fictitious name, picked at random. "I had the honour to meet you at Karlsruhe some time ago."

At Karlsruhe! That sounded feasible enough. Before being granted a roving commission, the baron had been second in command at Karlsruhe



Aerodrome. He had met many pilots at Karlsruhe. Possibly he had met this young, stern-faced lieutenant there.

That he had met him somewhere he was now convinced. The boy's face was so strangely familiar. But somehow the baron didn't think it was at Karlsruhe he had met him.

"We shall be honoured, Herr Lieutenant," he said abruptly but courteously, "if you will join us."

Guy needed no second asking. And after being formally introduced to the Hauptmann Von Arn, the Lieutenants Larm and Zobel, and the Unter-offizier Kern, he seated himself at the table.

"Yes, and as I was saying," remarked Von Arn, resuming a conversation which had been interrupted by the advent of Guy, "that ammunition dump contains over four tons of high explosive. Himmel! When it goes up it will blow Ouchy off the map!"

Ouchy!

Guy pricked up his ears. Ouchy was a British aerodrome south of Nancy.

"From what height do we bomb?" inquired Lieutenant Larm eagerly.

"From fifteen thousand feet," responded Von Arn.

Kern picked up his glass.

"A toast!" he cried. "May our bombs fall true and teach the hated Englanders that we are still masters of the air!"

The toast was drunk with acclamation, Guy joining in with the others.

But the boy was feeling none too comfortable. Scarce for a moment had the Baron Karlmann taken his eyes from him since he had joined the party. There was something disconcerting about the man's questioning stare.

Suddenly, during a lull in the conversation, the baron scraped back his chair and rose slowly to his feet.

"Lieutenant Felbe," he said, and there was that in his tone which instantly riveted the attention of his four companions. "you bear a remarkable resemblance to a certain notorious traitor!"

Guy leapt to his feet.

"You are pleased to mean?" he blazed.

"I refer," responded Baron Karlmann harshly, "to Guido von Sturm. I have been watching you. You are very like him!"

Guy resumed his seat.

"That," he said, with a laugh, "is my misfortune. You are not the first one, Herr Baron, to comment on my resemblance to Von Sturm."

The Lieutenant Zobel laughed raucously.

"You have my sympathy, Herr Lieutenant," he cried. "Donner! To be taken for that black-hearted traitor—"

Terminating the words with an expressive shrug of his shoulders, he drained his glass. The baron paid no heed to him. Still on his feet and his gaze on Guy, he continued:

"Yes, very like Von Sturm. Never have I seen a greater resemblance."

"Then you knew Von Sturm?" inquired Guy easily, albeit he knew how perilously thin was the ice on which he was treading at that moment.

"You knew Von Sturm?" he repeated, as the baron hesitated.

"It is two years since I met him," admitted the latter slowly, "but I do not easily forget faces."

"No," said Guy curtly, "but seemingly you easily confuse them, Herr Baron. Whilst Von Sturm was being lauded as our greatest War ace, I naturally did not resent the resemblance which I bear to him. But since a military court has proved him to be a traitor I have found the resemblance a



As the machine swept forward one of the planes caught the baron in the back and sent him reeling!

source of great embarrassment. I must ask you not to refer to it again!"

Baron Karlmann flushed. There was a chilling reproof in the words, which acted on him like a douche of cold water.

He had consumed a considerable amount of wine that evening. So much so indeed, that he had come perilously near to making a complete fool of himself. He could see now how wild and idiotic had been his vague suspicions that this young lieutenant was the notorious Guido von Sturm; suspicions engendered solely by the liquor which had mounted to his head.

It was absurd, preposterous, to have imagined for one moment that this young fellow seated here could be the Von Sturm who, it was common knowledge, had deserted to the British.

Clumsily Baron Karlmann hastened to make amends.

"Herr Lieutenant," he said, with a bow, "a thousand pardons if I have offended. It was the similarity in feature—"

"In feature alone, I am afraid," cut in the boy, with a laugh. "Often have I fervently wished that the similarity extended to that skill in the air which was Von Sturm's. But there, say no more about it, Herr Baron. You have made a mistake which many have made

before you and many will make again. It is unfortunate"—with a shrug of his shoulders—"but it cannot be helped."

His ease of speech and gesture, his whole attitude, had carried him through successfully. He knew full well that he had nothing at all to fear now from the apologetic baron who, resuming his seat, began to ply Guy with his attentions in an obvious effort to make up for his former boorishness.

He chattered away, talking volubly about the War and his own exploits, punctuating his observations with copious draughts from the glass at his elbow.

"A new machine has been given me, Herr Lieutenant," he said. "A Silberkugel scout. It is faster than any machine the cursed Englanders have on the Western Front."

"Faster than the Sopwythe scout?" exclaimed Guy incredulously.

"Yes," asserted the baron loudly. "Faster even than that, my friend."

"You are lucky to have been given such a craft, Herr Baron," said the boy enviously. "If it were permitted I should very much like to see it."

"Then you shall," promised the baron handsomely. "You shall see it. Unfortunately I leave Saarbrücken with



the dawn, but if you care to accompany me to the aerodrome—"

"I shall be delighted," cut in Guy gratefully. "To be shown your machine by you in person will be an honour which I will not lightly forget."

The baron beamed. Fool that he was ever to have thought that this most excellent young fellow could be the infamous Guido von Sturm. Pahl! The stupidest of blockheads would never have made such a ridiculous mistake.

"You are using the machine in this raid on Ouchy, I suppose?" said Guy pleasantly.

"No, no," the baron hastened to assure him. "The raid is being carried out by the Fokkers operating from Saarbrücken. No, I have a roving commission. I do not take part in such raids. I engage solely on offensive patrol."

"The raid," said Guy casually, drawing a bow at venture, "takes place to-morrow, does it not?"

It was the half-drunken Larm who answered him.

"Yes," he said thickly. "Ten machines leave for Ouchy one hour after dawn. It will be a great raid. Their objective is the ammunition dump."

"Do you go?" inquired Guy.

Larm laughed uproariously.

"No," he responded, "nor any of us here—else we would not be here. The pilots detailed for that raid will be already abed. You do not know our commandante, it seems."

"A disciplinarian," commented Guy. "Yes," interposed Zobel. "A perfect pig, if I may so express myself. It is a pleasure indeed to be away from him like this for a few hours."

#### A Shock for Baron Karlmann!

It was the early hours of the morning when that hilarious party broke up, and, remembering his promise to show Guy the Silberkugel scout, the Baron Karlmann insisted upon the boy accompanying him out to the aerodrome.

"For with the dawn I shall be gone," he explained. "Not to the line, mind you, for I do not feel like fighting to-day. I shall make for Mannheim where there is better hospitality and more comfortable quarters than there are at this aerodrome of Saarbrücken."

So Guy accompanied the party out to the aerodrome. Reaching there, Von Arn and his three brother officers went to their quarters, whilst Baron Karlmann made somewhat unsteadily towards the hangars, followed by Guy.

Passing the sentry patrolling the tarmac, the baron marched into the dimly-illuminated hangar where his Silberkugel scout was housed.

"Wheel her out!" he commanded the half dozen German mechanics who were on duty in the hangar.

The mechanics stared at him wonderingly.

"You mean at once, Herr Baron?" inquired a sergeant mechanic respectfully.

"Of course!" exploded the baron.

Turning, the sergeant rapped out an order. The wood-braced canvas door of the hangar was swung open, and the little black Silberkugel scout was wheeled on to the tarmac which fronted the long line of hangars.

A faint lightening of the sky to eastwards gave token that the dawn was at hand.

Swinging himself up to the cockpit, the baron pressed a switch which flooded the dashboard with illumination from shaded bulbs.

"See," he said proudly to Guy, "is she not a beauty? And she is as fast at seventeen thousand feet as she is at seven hundred."

"Yes," said Guy dubiously, "but she has an Ernst engine."

"Well, what of that?" demanded the baron testily. "The Ernst engine is one of the finest aero engines of the day."

Guy shook his head.

"I don't agree," he said firmly. "The

Ernst engine is most difficult to start up."

The baron laughed with gusty contempt.

"Pooh!" he exclaimed. "That is all you know, my friend. This engine, permit to tell you, will start up with the first swing of the propeller. The ignition cannot be bettered!"

Guy smiled incredulously, and it was a smile which served thoroughly to irritate Baron Karlmann.

"Here, you!" he bawled, dropping to the ground and turning towards the mechanics. "One of you swing that propeller."

He had switched on, and as one of the dungaree-clad mechanics pulled on the propeller the engine picked up with a sudden, shattering roar.

"There!" bellowed the baron triumphantly, swinging towards Guy.

"What have you got to say, now—"

Guy did not answer. The instant the engine had burst into life, he had swung himself agilely into the cockpit and slumped into the pilot's seat. Simultaneously his fingers had closed on the throttle, yanking it open to full.

"What are you doing in that cockpit?" With an enraged bellow, Baron Karlmann leapt forward as the scout surged against the chocks in front of the tired wheels of the undercarriage.

The leading edge of the lower plane caught him in the back, sending him reeling, as the machine lurched over the chocks and swept forward.

"Stop him!" screamed the baron.

"Stop him, you stupid fool!"

But he was too late. For already the Silberkugel scout was tearing away from the hangars with tail up. And, as the startled mechanics watched, the machine soared into the air in a steep, upward climb.

(Guy Tempest has got his full complement of pluck, but will he succeed in reaching his objective—Berlin? Order next week's MAGNET now, and thus make sure of continuing this thrilling War serial.)

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